A discursive analysis of police interviews with suspected paedophiles: the implications of ‘open’ and ‘closed’ interviewing for admission and denial

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A discursive analysis of police interviews with suspected paedophiles: The implications of 'open' and 'closed' interviewing for admission and denial

by

KELLY BENNEWORTH

A Doctoral Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy of Loughborough University

19 January 2004

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This thesis examines the discursive interaction between the police officer and the suspected paedophile in the investigative interview. A review of the literature revealed that paedophiles talk about their offences in terms of conventional relationships, personal bonds and emotions whilst being discrete about the sexual aspects of their activities. In the investigative interview, police officers must establish accountability, avoid emotional talk and encourage paedophiles to discuss their criminal activities in terms of direct, agentic detail. Given these two distinct approaches to the description of unlawful sexual contact, there is the potential for difficulties to arise in the elicitation of information in the investigative interview. This thesis explores how police officers and paedophiles negotiate an account of ‘what really happened’ whilst managing conflicting descriptions of the offence. This thesis also evaluates the relative effectiveness of interviewing strategies used by the police for maximising admission in suspected paedophiles.

Eleven interviews conducted at Leicestershire Police Constabulary were transcribed using the Jefferson system of notation. The offenders were male and aged between 34-54 years. The victims were male (n=5) and female (n=6) and aged between 5-13 years. Content analysis confirmed that police officers and paedophiles do describe sexual acts between adults and children differently. A ‘physical’ repertoire of explicit sexual terms was used more frequently by the police officers, while the suspects exhibited a preference for an ‘emotional’ repertoire of relationship talk and euphemisms ($\chi^2 = 125.518; \text{df} = 1; p<0.01$).

Discourse analysis explored what was happening when the police officers and suspected paedophiles used these repertoires. The analysis identified two distinct styles of interviewing with implications, not just for eliciting information from the suspect but also for admission and denial. Suspect admission was associated with ‘open’ police interviewing, where the officer invites the suspect to ‘tell the story’ using open-ended, relationship questioning. The suspect subsequently constructs an inappropriate, self-serving account, which the officer is able to reformulate to confirm
sexual contact and secure admission. On the other hand, suspect denial was associated with ‘closed’ police interviewing, characterised by the officer recounting an explicit sexual narrative and eliminating suspect intervention with the use of linguistic devices to hold the floor. The suspect, rather than being invited to tell the story, is only asked to confirm the police officer's version of events. The police officer cannot reformulate the suspect's narrative and subsequently increases opportunities for the suspect to deny the accusations.

The analysis represents a distinctive qualitative understanding of how language clashes shape the progression of the police interview. The findings provide a vocabulary for skilled police officers to both reflect on their own interviewing practices and communicate their skills to less experienced officers. This thesis also offers hope to police interviewers by suggesting that if they interview effectively they can make a difference to the outcome. The methodological implications of the study, strategies for future research and suggestions for a discourse-based police interviewing training programme are outlined.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would firstly like to thank my supervisor, Mick Billig, for his enthusiasm, patience and invaluable advice. I would also like to thank Dennis Howitt for permitting me to use his data for my pilot research; Carolyn Woods and all at the Leicestershire Police Constabulary Child Protection Unit for providing me with access to interviews and engaging me with fascinating anecdotes during my visits; the Economic and Social Research Council for funding my research, and my loved ones for their support.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Many individuals operate outside the acceptable parameters of sexual practice in society and violate the law in the process. However, there are few things viewed more obscene and that provoke as much public outrage as sex crimes against children. La Fontaine (1990) explains ‘sexual activities with children are almost universally condemned as a violation of what is normal sexual behaviour, the possibility arouses feelings of disgust and horror’ (p.21). Few can understand how the paedophile, a moniker used interchangeably with ‘child molester’, ‘child sexual abuser’, ‘pederast’ and ‘boy-lover’, can justify sexual acts with children.

There is considerable social interest in paedophile activity, demonstrated by the widespread media coverage of child pornography, celebrity child molesters and child sex-murders (The hunt for Britain’s paedophiles, 2002, Panorama, 1997a, 1997b, Tonight with Trevor McDonald, 2000). Celebrities alleged to have downloaded child pornography from the Internet include British musician Pete Townsend and pop star Gary Glitter, who was subsequently convicted for possessing indecent pictures of children on his laptop computer. Prominent individuals accused of committing sexual offences against children include pop star Michael Jackson, charged with seven counts of molesting a 13-year-old boy, and broadcaster Jonathan King, jailed for seven years for sexually assaulting five boys. Child murder investigations also receive considerable media attention, such as the killing of Sarah Payne by Roy Whiting, alleged to have a sexual preference for children. The case prompted the campaign for ‘Sarah’s Law’ enabling parents to have access to the national register of sex offenders. Following the murders of 10-year-olds Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman, it was revealed that perpetrator Ian Huntley, employed as a caretaker at the victims’ school, had faced previous accusations of indecently assaulting underage girls. Undoubtedly, paedophilia is an extremely significant and topical social problem.
In addition to representing a public issue, the offence of paedophilia also creates difficulties for the police investigation. Evidence in child sexual abuse cases is often limited to the conflicting testimonies of the abuser and the abused. Claims of child sexual abuse, like those of rape and sexual assault, often suffer from the lack of independent witnesses. There are also difficulties involved in extracting comprehensive statements from the alleged victims. Sexual abuse is often not recognised as such by children, argued to lack the mental and linguistic capacity to accurately and coherently recall the necessary details of the offence (Lamb et al, 1999). Therefore, paedophile investigations frequently rely on establishing the reliability of suspect testimony through the effective implementation of police interviewing. As paedophiles are often perceived as defensive, self-serving and mitigating speakers, it is vital that police interviewers are capable of obtaining the precise details of the sexual offence if the offenders are to be convicted.

The aims of this thesis are to examine how police officers interview suspected paedophiles and explore the relative effectiveness of the interviewing strategies used. Rather than designing experimental vignettes to encourage participants to theorize about what happens in police interviews or inviting police officers to indicate in questionnaires the effectiveness of various interviewing techniques, this topic necessitates the in-depth examination of authentic investigative interviews. A qualitative analysis of the language interactions between police officer and suspected paedophile will examine how the participants negotiate an account of ‘what really happened’, how speakers organise accusation and accountability, how contrasting descriptions of paedophilic acts are managed and how police interviewing can encourage guilty paedophiles to confess.

With regard to the structure of the thesis, Chapter 2 reviews the general literature on paedophile research, commencing with clinical and legal definitions of paedophilia and the incidence of sexual offences against children. The chapter then introduces the notion of a distinct paedophile discourse of justifications for sexual acts with children in an exploration of contemporary pro-paedophilia propaganda. This is following by a brief review of explanations for paedophilia, paedophile typologies, methods of assessing and treating paedophilia and the characteristics of victims. Chapter 2 will then summarise the research which has explored the types of justifications used to
account for paedophilic offences, once again isolating a specific paedophile discourse of minimisation, normalisation, victim-blame and the avoidance of accountability.

Chapter 3 reviews the research on police interviewing, beginning with the evolution of the police interview in the UK. The chapter outlines traditional methods of police interrogation, the role of coercive questioning and early miscarriages of justice. This is followed by an account of the implementation of the PEACE investigative interview in 1992, a standardised interviewing training programme for use by all British police forces. This includes an overview of the accompanying investigative interviewing guidelines which recommend the use of a police discourse of precise, agentic detail and intent, contrasting with the mitigating accounts of paedophiles. Chapter 3 then provides a summary of recent police interviewing studies, including the development of cognitive interviewing and methods for improving the testimonies of vulnerable witnesses, such as adults with learning disabilities and children. Research concerning the interviewing of suspects is then outlined, specifically, the existence of a police confession culture, explanations for and rates of suspect admission and the impact of suspect and interview characteristics on admission rates.

The preceding literature review chapters identify two contrasting approaches to describing sexual acts with children, a paedophile discourse which justifies and minimises sexual contact and a police interviewing discourse of criminal liability and bodily detail. Chapter 4 examines the potential application of discourse analysis to the study of police interviews with paedophiles and the management of these two discourses. The chapter commences by outlining the development of discursive psychology and the application of discourse analysis as a methodology. A review of the themes found in discourse analytic research, with particular relevance to the study of police-paedophile investigative interviews, is then presented. This is followed by an evaluation of research conducted in the US, Europe and the UK exploring formulations of criminal behaviour within the courtroom, sex offender treatment sessions and police-suspect interviews. Chapter 5 describes the materials used in the thesis, commencing with a research interview with a convicted child molester (see Howitt, 1995) to pilot the method of analysis. The chapter then provides details of the eleven police-paedophile interviews conducted at Leicestershire Police Constabulary
Child Protection Unit used in the main study. The chapter also explains how the data was prepared for analysis, including transcription conventions.

Content analysis was conducted on the interview transcriptions to confirm whether police officers and paedophiles describe sexual acts with children differently, as suggested in the literature review. The quantitative analysis, detailed in Chapter 6, provides a summary of the data and reveals a number of interesting and statistically significant associations, confirming that the suspects employed an 'emotional' repertoire of relationship terms and euphemisms, while the police officers adopted a 'physical' repertoire of sexual and bodily detail. The analysis also examines when and how frequently the associated expressions are used, paving the way for discourse analysis to examine how such descriptions are put into practice.

The following two analytical chapters present two case studies. Chapter 7 provides a detailed analysis of an interview in which the suspected paedophile admits to allegations of gross indecency. The admission episode is characterised by the police officer surrendering the floor to encourage the suspect to tell the story using an innocuous 'opening' question. The suspect is permitted to recount an elaborate, mitigating narrative, with no interruption from the police officer, incorporating minimisation, normalisation and inappropriate description. The police officer then adopts sexual and criminal terminology in the form of a 'reformulating question', readdressing the illegal aspects of the relationship. This enables the interviewer to elicit an incriminating disclosure from the suspect.

It was necessary to ascertain whether this distinctive style of police interviewing was observable in an interview which incorporated denial of the allegations. Chapter 8 examines an interview with a suspected paedophile who denies gross indecency. The interview commences with the police officer assuming the role of the narrator, formulating an explicitly sexual and criminal narrative under the guise of the 'victim'. The police officer then utilises linguistic devices to hold the floor, restricting the suspect's turns to interruptions which take the form of denials. A final 'closing' question invites the suspect to respond, yet permits only the confirmation of the police officer's version of events. By preventing the suspect from generating his own
potentially incriminating narrative, the interviewer permits the suspect to refute the allegations with a simple denial.

Chapters 7 and 8 demonstrate that there is more to the discursive interactions than the use of ‘emotional’ and ‘physical’ repertoires. The analysis also identifies two contrasting styles of police interviewing with implications for suspect admission and denial. The case study in Chapter 7 reveals that the likelihood of the suspect admitting the accusation is associated with ‘open’ police interviewing. In Chapter 8, a second suspect’s denial of the accusation is related to the use of ‘closed’ police interviewing. Rather than merely identifying two contrasting approaches to describing the paedophilic act, the case studies reveal two distinct approaches to the interviewing of suspected paedophiles.

Chapter 9 confirms that the two interviewing styles and their implications for suspect admission and denial are present in the remaining nine interviews. In other words, the interviews in which the suspected paedophiles admit to the allegations tended to be those in which the police officer employed ‘open’ interviewing, while the interviews in which the suspects deny the accusations are associated with the ‘closed’ style of police interviewing. The methodological implications of these findings and consequences for the advancement of police interviewing techniques with suspected paedophiles are discussed in Chapter 10.
CHAPTER 2

PAEDOPHILE LANGUAGE AND CONSTRUCTIONS OF SEXUAL ACTS WITH CHILDREN

The concept of the paedophile

Clinical definitions of paedophilia

The paedophile, from the 17th Century Latin 'paederast', meaning 'a man who has sexual relations with a boy', and the Greek 'pais' meaning 'boy' and 'erastes' meaning 'lover' (Collins English Dictionary, 2000), has been constructed in psychological and psychiatric definitions as an individual with 'a fondness for sexual relations with children' (Thomas, 1985, cited in Holmes, 1991, p.83).

An older person whose conscious sexual desires and responses are directed, at least in part, toward dependent, developmentally immature children and adolescents who do not fully comprehend these actions and are unable to give informed consent.


The DSM-IV-TR (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition, Text Revision, 2000) defines a paedophile as an individual, aged 16 years or older, who experiences 'recurrent, intense sexually arousing fantasies, sexual urges, or behaviours involving sexual activity with a prepubescent child or children (aged 13 years or younger)'. The paedophile must also be at least five years older than the child. Despite the Latin stipulation that a 'paederast' is a 'a man who has sexual relations with a boy' and the Greek term 'boy-lover', contemporary clinical definitions of paedophilia do not specify the gender of either perpetrator or victim. The diagnostic criteria for paedophilia are often referred to, although they have been devised for medical, not law enforcement, purposes. Of course, not all paedophiles act out their preferences for sexual practices with a child. Subsequently, 'paedophilia is not in itself an offence, but its indulgence is' (Card, 1981, p.14).
Legal definitions for paedophilic offences

The practice of paedophilia is not specified as such in British criminal law. However, the associated array of sexual offences against children can be catalogued as follows. Under the Sexual Offences Act of 1956, a male can be convicted of rape or attempted rape if he has intercourse with a female who does not give her consent to the act. Consent is invalidated if "the female is so young (under the age of 14 years) that her knowledge and understanding are such that she is not in a position to decide whether to consent or resist" (Card, 1981, p.6). The offence of unlawful sexual intercourse with a female aged 13 years and under is a common alternative to rape in cases of child sexual abuse as it as obviates the need for the jury to enter into the issue of the victim's consent. The offence of buggery, where "one of the parties penetrates the anus of the other party with his penis" (p.8), is also considered a sexual offence against a child when the victim is male and under the age of 16 years.

With regard to the Indecency with Children Act of 1960, the offences of indecent assault and gross indecency with a child are particularly frequent in cases of paedophilia. Indecent assault corresponds to sexual contact with a child which does not involve the genitals, for example, kissing a child in a sexual manner, overt suggestions of sexual activity with a child and touching the breasts of a child. Gross indecency with a child under the age of 13 years involves performing a sexual act involving the genitals, either in the presence of the child or inciting the child to perform the sexual act. For example, encouraging the child to masturbate the accused or masturbating in the presence of the child. Finally, the Protection of Children Act of 1978 prohibits the taking, possessing and distributing of indecent photographs of children when the victim is under the age of 16 years.

There are discrepancies between psychological classifications of paedophilic tendencies and legal definitions of actual sexual offences against children. As previously discussed, not all paedophiles act out their sexual preferences and the practice of paedophilia is not specified as such in criminal law. However, it can be argued that sexual acts with children are essentially paedophilic in nature. The term 'paedophile' is also commonly recognised in the vocabulary of social sciences research on sex offending. Therefore, for the purpose of clarity, this investigation will
adopt the definitional system employed by Howitt (1995) and utilise the term ‘paedophilia’ as ‘a generic name for sexual offenders against underage persons’ (p.17).

The prevalence of paedophilic offences

In addition to the contention regarding categories of individuals who contemplate and/or perform sexual acts with children, there are also considerable inconsistencies between projected rates of child sexual abuse. These inconsistencies are most frequently between large-scale surveys of victimisation and official crime statistics. With regard to research conducted to establish the extent of sexual abuse victimisation, estimated rates of individuals in the UK who have had sexual contact with adults prior to the age of 16 years have ranged from 3-5% (Boyd, 2002), 16% (Finkelhor, 1984), 20% (Holmes, 1991), 24% (Kinsey, 1948, 1953), 28% (Russell, 1983) and 50% (Wyatt and Doyle-Peters, 1986). The absence of data concerning active pedophiles currently in the UK also increases the ambiguity.

Table 1: Victims of child abuse on UK child protection registers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abuse type</th>
<th>1998</th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neglect</td>
<td>13,000</td>
<td>13,900</td>
<td>14,000</td>
<td>12,900</td>
<td>10,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical abuse</td>
<td>9,900</td>
<td>9,100</td>
<td>8,700</td>
<td>7,300</td>
<td>4,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual abuse</td>
<td>6,700</td>
<td>6,600</td>
<td>5,600</td>
<td>4,500</td>
<td>2,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional abuse</td>
<td>5,200</td>
<td>5,400</td>
<td>5,500</td>
<td>4,800</td>
<td>4,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>34,800</td>
<td>35,000</td>
<td>33,800</td>
<td>29,500</td>
<td>21,600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Children and young people on child protection registers, NSPCC, 2002)

The NSPCC statistics in Table 1 demonstrate that sexual abuse against children, the least common of all forms of child abuse, is decreasing dramatically. On the other hand, the officially recorded crime statistics for sexual offences against children in Table 2 suggest that acts of gross indecency with children have increased since 2000. The remaining categories of ‘buggery’, ‘indecent assault’ and ‘rape’ incorporate data for both child and adult victims.
Table 2: Official UK crime statistics incorporating sexual offences against children

<table>
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<tr>
<td>Buggery 1</td>
<td>657</td>
<td>566</td>
<td>437</td>
<td>401</td>
<td>354</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indecent assault 1</td>
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<td>3683</td>
<td>3614</td>
<td>3530</td>
<td>3613</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indecent assault 2</td>
<td>18979</td>
<td>19524</td>
<td>20664</td>
<td>20301</td>
<td>21765</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape 1</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>504</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>664</td>
<td>735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape 2</td>
<td>6523</td>
<td>7132</td>
<td>7809</td>
<td>7929</td>
<td>9008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross indecency with a child 3</td>
<td>1314</td>
<td>1293</td>
<td>1365</td>
<td>1336</td>
<td>1665</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>31733</td>
<td>32702</td>
<td>34489</td>
<td>34161</td>
<td>37140</td>
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</table>

1 Male victims
2 Female victims
3 Both male and female victims


In one of the few attempts to systematically differentiate sexual offences committed against children, Craissati and McClurg (1996, cited in Howitt, 2002) observed perpetrators of child sexual abuse frequenting court in South East London over a two-year period. Of the sexual offences against children determined by British criminal law, 68% of the perpetrators were charged with indecent assault, defined as non-genital sexual contact with a child under the age of 13 years, 9% of gross indecency, 9% of buggery and 7% of rape.

Despite these significant preliminary findings, there are considerable problems when relying on officially recorded rates of sexual offences against children (La Fontaine, 1990). Firstly, a sexual offence must have been committed. Due to the nature of the offence, the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim and the naiveté of the child, sexual abuse is often not recognised as such. It is estimated that between 73% (Voigt, 1972, cited in Righton, 1981) to 82% (Kelly et al, 1991) of abusers are known to their victims before physical contact is initiated; ‘children are more at risk from people they know than from strangers’ (Finkelhor, 1984, p.124). The perpetrator typically occupies the role of relative, neighbour, the friend of a parent or the parent of a friend (Howells, 1979, Mohr et al, 1964, Plummer, 1979), yet approximately 19% of abusers known by the victims are close relatives (Kelly et al, 1991). Secondly, the victim must be motivated to report the abuse. Due to prior friendship and the unequal power distribution between the abuser and the abused, the likelihood of the victim reporting the offence is diminished.
Conviction rates are also determined by whether the police act on the claims of the alleged victim and classify the incident as an offence. Countless studies have explored the issue of interviewing child victims of sexual abuse, particularly the difficulties involved in extracting comprehensive statements from child witnesses and the role of interviewer suggestibility (Ceci and Bruck, 1995, Davies, 1991). Given that evidence in sexual abuse cases is often limited to the testimonies of the abuser and the abused, the investigation frequently relies on establishing the veracity of the statements of suspected paedophiles.

The pro-paedophilia argument

There is considerable social interest in the apparent increase in paedophile activity, demonstrated by the widespread media coverage of child pornography, Internet paedophilia, celebrity child molesters and child sex-murders (The hunt for Britain’s paedophiles, 2002, Panorama, 1997a, 1997b, Tonight with Trevor McDonald, 2000). The problem has become more perceptible due to the wealth of pro-paedophilia propaganda generated by active pedophile organisations justifying practices antithetical to the beliefs of most individuals.

Despite the upsurge of paedophile organisations during the late 1970’s, masquerading as coalitions for sexual liberation, many of the organisations were defunct by the mid-1980’s. These included the Rene Guyon Society and the Childhood Sensuality Circle, both based in California, the Dutch Society for Sexual Reform and the Paedophile Information Exchange in the UK. A number of groups are still in existence, such as the North American Man-Boy Love Association (NAMBLA), the largest paedophile organisation in the world, the Danish Paedophile Association and the Australasian Man-Boy Love Association. The legacy of these groups is an abundance of pro-paedophilia publications, accessible on the Internet, which depict the sexual repression of children, the value of paedophile relationships and child-precipitated sexual contact.
Childhood sexuality

In Ancient Greek society, the sexual use of children was an accepted practice with deeply religious significance and the norm for several centuries (Barnard et al, 1989). Instigating the highest form of sexual relationship, the paedophile was considered a man of superior moral character (Holmes, 1991). Licht (1953), a noted historian of sexual expression in Ancient Greece, stated that paedophilia was a central factor in the development of boys, ‘paedophilia was to the Greeks at first the most important way of bringing up the male youth’ (p.441). Scholarly members of the pro-paedophilia lobby employed the rationale of early Greek paedophiles that their activities were beneficial for educating young men in the ways of manhood and citizenship. However, many failed to consider how damaging the pederastic experience must have been for many Greek boys (Bloch, 2001).

In ‘Child loving: The erotic child in Victorian culture’, Kincaid (1992) describes sexual activity as ‘an inevitable and harmless aspect of childhood’ in the majority of preindustrial cultures (p.128). Freud also argued that, as all individuals are born with basic sexual drives, children as young as three can experience sexual pleasure during the earlier stages of psychosexual development:

To suppose that children have no sexual life - sexual excitations and needs and kinds of satisfaction - but suddenly acquire it between the ages of twelve and fourteen, would (quite apart from any observations) be as improbable, and indeed senseless, biologically as to suppose that they brought no genitals with them into the world and only grew them at time of puberty.

(Freud, 1963, p.353)

The assertion that self-exploration begins at a very early age is upheld by Kinsey who conducted extensive survey research on sexual behaviour (1948, 1953). Kinsey concluded that orgasm could be observed in children from the age of four months, with the majority of sexual exploration occurring between the ages of 8-13 years. The claims that children experience sexual pleasure are profoundly contested and remain unsubstantiated by empirical evidence, yet the findings of Licht, Freud and Kinsey are often cited by pro-paedophilia organisations who maintain that children warrant the same sexual rights as adults. Condemning the social ideal of ‘childhood innocence’ as a euphemism for the sexual repression of childhood, NAMBLA
campaigns for the abolition of laws against consensual sexual acts between children and adults (Sampson, 1994):

NAMBLA is strongly opposed to age of consent laws and other restrictions which deny adults and youth the full enjoyment of their bodies and control over their lives.  
(NAMBLA bulletin, 1984, cited in deYoung, 1989)

Pro-paedophilia organisations claim that the oppression of a child’s sexual nature is more harmful than sexual activity between adults and children and advocate the abandonment of laws ‘which destroy loving relationships merely on the basis of the age of the participants’ (O’Carroll, 1979). The domination of the child as a sexual being by the family and the community is then contrasted with the freedom of choice and nurturant feelings involved in the paedophile relationship.

*The value of paedophile relationships*

In the pro-paedophilia literature, the paedophile is predominantly characterised as a friend of the child, affectionate, benevolent and fond of children (Virkunnen, 1975). The paedophile is portrayed as striving to provide the child with emotional stability, support, companionship and protection (O’Carroll, 2000, Schlegel, 1966, cited in Brongersma, 1990). The paedophile often assumes a mentor role to satisfy needs others may not be capable of fulfilling and ‘boost the boy’s feelings of self-esteem and self-worth’ (Benjamin, 1997).

Some boys are emotionally deprived, deeply lonely, socially isolated children who seek, as it were, a refuge in the adult’s love and for whom, because of their misery, see it as a stroke of luck to have found such an ‘enormously nurturant relationship.  
(Schmidt, 1991, cited in Benjamin, 1997)

The paedophile-child friendship is often depicted as evolving into a romantic relationship characterised by ‘intense love and affection’ (Li, 1991, p.139). The sexual aspects of the union are rarely described in detail. Mark Hanson, convicted for the gross indecency of three boys aged 7-14 years, attempts to explain the purpose of his paedophile friendships:

...sometimes I get involved with boys and I don’t want any sexual contact it’s just the friendship side of it...I think I relate more to boys than I do anyone else...I only seem
to be attracted to boys, or very young men...in some cases it can be that you’re not sharing just the sexual experience you’re sharing life in general like enjoyment. I’ve got hobbies that are the same like football or whatever so it’s not just the sexual part of it...

(The hunt for Britain’s paedophiles, 2002)

While striving to emphasise the platonic basis of his attraction to children, Hanlon draws attention to impending sexual contact, ‘sometimes...I don’t want any sexual contact’, ‘in some cases it can be that you’re not sharing just the sexual experience’ and ‘it’s not just the sexual part of it’. In a paper delivered at the International Academy of Sex Research by paedophile-apologist and NAMBLA member Tom O'Carroll, it was evident that the central tenet of the paedophile faith is the notion that, not only is sex between adults and children beneficial, it is genuinely enjoyed by the child:

Once a boy has determined that he has found an older friend that he can trust implicitly, it is more likely if any sexual activities are proposed, the initiative will come from the boy. Driven by the insistence of his newly emerging hormones and his natural inquisitiveness, he will want to learn from his older, more experienced friend what his body is capable of doing, and what pleasurable feelings he can experience.

(O’Carroll, 2000)

**The issue of consent**

The idea that the paedophile-child relationship incorporates ‘intimate acts which the minor evidently enjoys and eagerly requests’ (Brongersma, 1990) implies mutuality and consent (Sampson, 1994, Virkkunen, 1975). It is misleading to maintain that children can give genuine consent to activities they have not developed the emotional maturity to comprehend (Finkelhor, 1984). Despite this, pro-paedophile literature insists that most children could have avoided the experience if they wanted to (Mohr *et al.*, 1964) and reports of victim-precipitated offences remain popular in pro-paedophile ‘investigations’. Schultz (1972, cited in O’Carroll, 1979) refers to unspecified ‘past sexual research’ when alleging that child victims are ‘collaborative’ in 21% of paedophilia cases, ‘seducers’ in 21% of cases, ‘non-objecting’ in 40% of cases, ‘fully participating’ in 60% of cases and ‘encouraging’ in 66-95% of cases. As one member of a paedophile support group explained, ‘I only encourage boys who come to me and want me to have a bit of sex play with them’ (Li, 1991, p.136).
Boys are less inclined than girls to talk to their parents about sexual adventures with grown-ups. Boys tend to take the initiative in such acts more often than girls. They are less likely to reject advances by an adult and more likely to cooperate in any sexual acts which ensue. Boys are more receptive to advances made by strangers. They are more interested than girls in sexual activities and seem to be much more open to involving themselves sexually with an adult partner.

(Brongersma, 1990, p.168)

Despite the damaging repercussions of sexual crimes against children, the extract contains a series of descriptions, such as ‘sexual adventures’, ‘take the initiative’, ‘less likely to reject advances’, ‘likely to cooperate’, ‘receptive to advances’, ‘interested’ and ‘open to involving themselves’, which portray the victims as sexually aware and willing participants. Considering the remarkable range of explanations employed in pro-paedophilia propaganda to account for sexual activity with children, it would be worthwhile to see if any empirical research has been conducted in the field.

**Research on paedophilia**

*Explanations for paedophilia*

There are countless theories which attempt to explain why adults become sexually interested in children. Biological theories, which attend to the origins of deviant sexual arousal, are often unfounded. These theories include the evolutionary theory, which suggests that males have a natural propensity for sexual aggression (Marshall and Barbaree, 1990) and claims that sex offenders endure increased neurological damage in the form of brain injury, tumours and temporal lobe dysfunction (Barnard et al, 1989). The empirical testing of the latter has been restricted to animal experimentation. Further biological theories include the research of Goy and McEwen (1977), who claim that sexual offences are a consequence of too high or too low testosterone levels in males. This was supported by Rada (1978) who also cited hormonal imbalances as a precipitating factor in sex offending. However, it has been argued that testosterone levels in sex offenders are indistinguishable from other types of criminal. In the field of genetics, allegations that sex offenders inherit sex chromosome abnormalities and a penchant for sexual violence (Bradford, 1985, cited in Barnard et al, 1989, Goy and McEwen, 1977) are also inconclusive.
Psychiatric explanations for paedophilic behaviour have cited impulse control disorders, psychopathy and psychoses as causal factors (Hammer and Glueck, 1957), yet there is little evidence of psychiatric disorder representing a general trait in child sex offenders. Senility has been cited as a contributing factor. However, as paedophiles are commonly located in the 16-31 age group (Groth, 1979a), there is a lack of support for this line of reasoning. Paedophiles have also been described as suffering from mental retardation. Nevertheless, empirical testing has concluded that paedophiles do not significantly differ from non-paedophiles in terms of intelligence (Mohr et al, 1964).

Particularly prevalent in the literature are psychological explanations for paedophilia. These include developmental theories which cite inadequate family dynamics and deficient attachment bonds (Marshall, 1989, Marshall and Barbaree, 1990) as priming males to seek intimacy in inappropriate sexual interactions. Interpersonal difficulties such as inadequate social skills (Fitch, 1962, Goldstein et al, 1973, Panton, 1978) and the inability to relate to adult sexual partners (Araji and Finkelhor, 1985) are perceived to increase the propensity for sexual activity with children. The unconfident individual is considered to acquire power and respect by establishing a relationship with an inexperienced and non-threatening child (Hammer and Glueck, 1957, Howells, 1979). An immature individual is also more likely to identify with the emotional level and communicative style of a child and enjoy child-like preoccupations (Bell and Hall, 1976, Groth and Birnbaum, 1978). However, few investigations have substantiated these claims.

Further psychological concepts include the psychodynamic theory which attributes paedophilic urges to castration anxiety and unresolved Oedipal conflicts (Freud, 1962, 1963, Hammer and Glueck, 1957). Paedophilic offences in adulthood represent symbolic revenge in which the perpetrator masters the childhood sexual trauma induced by inner conflicts by assuming the role of tormentor (Burgess et al, 1988, cited in Howitt, 1995, Groth, 1979b):

A molester's habitual sexual abuse of children is a repeated and unsuccessful attempt to master his own early sexual trauma; unable to overcome the anxiety, guilt and pain of his childhood trauma, the molester identifies with the aggressor in order to project or displace the original conflict into another victim.

(Barnard et al, 1989, p.31)
Psychodynamic theories of paedophilia have been portrayed as lacking in empirical support (Howitt, 1995). A contemporary alternative to the psychodynamic theory, sharing a basis in early experiences of sexual activity, is the psychosexual theory. Groth (1979b) claimed that paedophiles participate in increased sexual experimentation with peers during childhood, a premise supported by the sexualisation model of Howitt (1995, 2002) who noted that 32% of a sample of convicted paedophiles experienced sexual contact during early development compared to 3% of a group of police officers. Psychosexual theory explains the heightened sexual responsiveness of the paedophile to children (Freund et al, 1967, Howells, 1981) and goes some way to accounting for the ‘cycle of abuse’ (Finkelhor, 1984). However, it does not take into consideration paedophiles with no early experience of sexual activity and victims of childhood sexualisation who do not offend in later life (Groth, 1979b).

Behavioural learning theories also attend to the notion of acquired sexual preferences as a consequence of childhood experience. Learning theories attempt to explain how early behaviours are maintained, for example, the conditioning of sexual arousal by associating childhood sexual activity with fantasy in conjunction with masturbatory repetition (McGuire et al, 1965). However, whilst explaining the strengthening of deviant sexual interests the theory does not identify the origins of paedophilia or expand upon the translation of fantasy imagery into overt behaviour. In terms of the influence of situational factors on paedophilic activity, alcohol abuse has obtained considerable empirical support (Aarens et al, 1978) and is argued to be a feature of 19% of child sexual abuse cases (La Fontaine, 1990). There is limited evidence to support the effect of difficulties in adult romantic relationships (Groth, 1979b) and sexual frustration (Fitch, 1962) on adults seeking gratification in children. The influence of additional situational dynamics, such as stress, unemployment and bereavement, remains largely untested (Groth, 1979a).

Sociocultural theories of paedophilic behaviour originate in the feminist acknowledgement of the patriarchal norms of society. Paedophilia is understood in the context of the cultural acceptance of male domination and the value of the sexual partner as subservient and youthful (Russell, 1983). Russell also recognises the potential of power differentials to facilitate sexual offending, for example, the power of male over female, adult over child, physically superior over physically weaker and
superior economic strength over economic dependence. Despite support for the feminist notion that socialisation through pornography and advertising contributes to sexual abuse (Goldstein et al, 1973, Wyre, 1987), studies rarely consider the role of the female paedophile as more than a partner to an overbearing male offender (Blackburn, 1993).

The preconditions model (Araji and Finkelhor, 1985, Finkelhor, 1984) takes into account the multi-causal nature of paedophilic behaviour and the interaction between the preceding biological, psychiatric, psychological and sociocultural factors. The model, the result of a comprehensive meta-analysis of explanations for paedophilia, identifies four fundamental preconditions necessary for an individual to assume the role of paedophile and seek sexual gratification from a child. The first precondition is emotional congruence, as relating to a child must be emotionally gratifying for the individual. There must be a fit between the adult’s emotional needs and the traits of the child, for example, a lack of self-esteem and psychosocial immaturity. The second precondition is sexual arousal; the individual must be capable of being sexually aroused by the child, possibly as a consequence of socialisation through child pornography, hormonal imbalances or psychopathy. This is accompanied by blockage; the individual is frustrated in efforts to obtain sexual gratification from normatively approved sources due to ineffective social skills and problems relating to adult females. Finally, there is disinhibition. The individual is not deterred by conventional social restraints against having sexual contact with the child, for example, due to senility or alcohol abuse.

The preconditions model, not unlike the preceding theories, has been denounced for a lack of empirical evidence and a reliance on information derived from convicted paedophiles incarcerated for committing sexual offences or in sex offender treatment programmes (Durkin and Bryant, 1999). The theories could be limited to explaining the behaviour of paedophiles who have been apprehended, convicted and imprisoned. Often, the control groups used are other types of offender, for example, those incarcerated for acquisitional offences. Subsequently, we only learn of the variance between two prison groups, not explicitly paedophiles and non-paedophiles. Rather than isolating the causes of paedophilia, the findings are often commonsense assumptions which describe the characteristics of paedophilia. Paedophiles do show
an unusual pattern of sexual arousal to children; however, no concrete evidence exists about why (Howitt, 2000).

**Types of paedophile**

Evaluations of paedophile typologies are widespread in the literature on sexual offences against children. Early research differentiated paedophiles in the basis of the use of non-sexual force. Groth and Burgess (1977) established two categories of offender, those who utilised *sex-pressure*, the absence of physical force through enticement (persuasion) or entrapment (bribery) and secondly, those who employed *sex-force*, coercion which was exploitative (sexual relief with no relationship) or sadistic (pleasure from hurting and/or humiliating the child). This largely untested method of classification was immediately succeeded by the more comprehensive fixated/regressed taxonomy (Groth, 1979a, Groth and Birnbaum, 1978), which identified paedophilic traits beyond the presence of non-sexual force. Fixated offenders, representing 48% of the paedophile population, were described as sustaining a persistent primary sexual orientation toward children, while relationships with adults were merely coincidental. Fixated offenders were rarely married and targeted unknown male victims. For regressed offenders, the remaining 52% of the paedophile population, sexual involvement with a child represented a clear departure from a primary sexual orientation towards adults. The child becomes a temporary substitute for a troubled adult relationship as the offender regresses to an earlier level of psychosexual development. Regressed offenders were often married and sought female victims who were friends or relatives.

A paedophile classification system currently being employed by US police forces is the preferential/situational dichotomy (Dietz, 1983). Dietz examined hundreds of child sexual offence cases at the FBI Behavioral Science Unit and subsequently cultivated a typology to fit law enforcement needs. The preferential paedophile, likened to the fixated paedophile in that the individual's primary sexual orientation is towards children, is characteristic of higher socio-economic groups. The subcategories of the preferential paedophile (cited in table 3) comprise *seductive, introverted* and *sadistic*. Dietz noted common characteristics, motivations, victim criteria and methods of operation for the purpose of profiling the offender, enabling
police forces to locate the most likely suspects and limit wastage of investigative resources.

Table 3: Dietz’s subcategories for the preferential child molester

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Seductive</th>
<th>Introverted</th>
<th>Sadistic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Common characteristics</strong></td>
<td>1. Sexual preference for children</td>
<td>2. Collects child pornography or erotica</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Motivation</strong></td>
<td>Identification</td>
<td>Fear of communication</td>
<td>Need to inflict pain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Victim criteria</strong></td>
<td>Age and gender preferences</td>
<td>Strangers or very young</td>
<td>Age and gender preferences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Method of operation</strong></td>
<td>Seduction process</td>
<td>Non-verbal sexual contact</td>
<td>Lure or force</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Adapted from Dietz, 1983)

The situational paedophile, likened to the regressed paedophile in that sexual contact with children represents a distraction from a primary sexual orientation towards peer age individuals, is characteristic of lower socio-economic groups. The subcategories of the situational paedophile (cited in table 4) comprise *regressed, morally indiscriminate, sexually indiscriminate* and *inadequate*. Once again, Dietz considered basic characteristics, motivations, victim criteria, methods of operation and the use of pornography for the purpose of profiling the offender.

Table 4: Dietz’s subcategories for the situational child molester

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Regressed</th>
<th>Morally indiscriminate</th>
<th>Sexually indiscriminate</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Basic characteristics</strong></td>
<td>Poor coping skills</td>
<td>User of people</td>
<td>Sexual experimentation</td>
<td>Social misfit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Motivation</strong></td>
<td>Substitution</td>
<td>Why not?</td>
<td>Boredom</td>
<td>Insecurity and curiosity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Victim criteria</strong></td>
<td>Availability</td>
<td>Vulnerability and opportunity</td>
<td>New and different</td>
<td>Non-threatening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Method of operation</strong></td>
<td>Coercion</td>
<td>Lure, force or manipulation</td>
<td>Involve in existing activity</td>
<td>Exploits size, advantage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pornography collection</strong></td>
<td>Possible</td>
<td>Sadomasochistic: detective magazines</td>
<td>Highly likely: varied nature</td>
<td>Likely</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Adapted from Dietz, 1983)

More recent attempts to construct a extensive paedophile typology have included Knight and Prentky (1990, cited in Blackburn, 1993), who composed a classification system based on five factors, *social competence, sexual preoccupation with children, non-offence contact with children, physical injury to child* and *sadism* to yield a total
of 24 types. However, despite being increasingly full and detailed, paedophile typologies suffer from a lack of empirical evidence and research validation (Howitt, 1995). There is a reliance on data derived from incarcerated offenders. It can be argued that the fixated/regressed and preferential/situational dichotomies apply to types of convicted paedophile, those who have experienced the criminal justice system.

There are also considerable problems with the use of behavioural dichotomies. Previous studies have attempted to fit the complex motivations, preferences, activities and behaviours of paedophiles into categories which are not mutually exclusive or exhaustive. The research fails to take into account membership of larger paedophile networks, such as child sex rings, and the consequences of such integration on contrasting paedophile types. Incestuous, female and adolescent offenders are also rarely considered. Rather than fitting into one homogeneous group, it has been argued that most paedophiles are an amalgamation of both fixated/preferential and regressed/situational types and are motivated by a wide variety of factors (Conte, 1985).

In addition to differentiating types of paedophile, research has strived to identify the more generic traits of paedophiles. As previously discussed, paedophiles are predominantly known by their victims prior to the instigation of sexual contact (Finkelhor, 1984, Kelly et al, 1991, Voigt, 1972, cited in Righton, 1981). There is also consensus regarding the age, gender and sexuality of the paedophile. It is argued that 90-95% of paedophiles are men (Holmes, 1991, Howitt, 1995, Kelly et al, 1991). In terms of the sexuality of the paedophile, 90-95% of perpetrators are heterosexual, irrespective of the gender of the victim (Groth, 1979a, Holmes, 1991). The average age of the paedophile is 34, with only 20% of paedophiles over the age of 46-years (Russell, 1983). This is corroborated by Groth (1979a) who claimed that 71% of paedophiles are under the age of 35. A common perception is that paedophilia transcends all communities, socio-economic classes, professions, races and religions, however, a limited number of studies have suggested that 67% of paedophiles are white and, based on occupation, 32% are from the upper classes and 34% are from the middle classes (Russell, 1983). This is supported by Wilson and Cox (1983, cited in Howitt, 1995) who, on the basis of a postal survey administered to members of the
Paedophile Information Exchange, claimed that 38% of paedophiles are professionals, 34% of paedophiles are white-collar workers, 14% of paedophiles are blue-collar workers and the remaining 14% of paedophiles are unemployed.

However, in addition to the methodological caveats associated with the utilisation of paedophile typologies, the research is extremely dated and there is an absence of empirical evidence to support the claims. Subsequently, the findings remain largely inconclusive. The reliance on questionable survey techniques, such as self-report questionnaires, casts doubt on the veracity of the responses. As the research relies on available samples of prison-based paedophiles or those in recognised paedophile organisations, the findings can only imply that the average age of the convicted paedophile who has been caught and incarcerated is 34-years and 38% of offenders who are members of paedophile organisations are professionals. To increase the ambiguity, paedophiles have also been described as typical of ‘men in general’ (Howitt, 1995).

**The assessment and treatment of paedophilia**

The effectiveness of the physiological and psychological techniques used to diagnose paedophilia is a prevalent theme in psychological research. Studies have examined a range of methods employed to forecast deviant sexual arousal and the risk of recidivism. A common form of assessment is ‘penile plethysmography’, also known as ‘penile tumescence’, a physiological lie detector that measures genital reactions to sexual stimuli in the form of slides, video and audio recordings (Freund et al, 1967). Despite being a valid measure of paedophilic interest (Blackburn, 1993), the test establishes sexual arousal but not paedophilic behaviour. Prior to confirming clinical validity, there are a number of theoretical and technical issues to consider, primarily the use of laboratory conditions and the ability of some participants to inhibit responses to deviant stimuli, known as ‘phallometric faking’ (Howitt, 1995). Psychological methods of diagnosing paedophilia are anchored in clinical interviewing (Barnard et al, 1989), sexual interest and sexual history questionnaires (Howitt, 1995), depression and anxiety inventories and the MMPI (Panton, 1978).
Following imprisonment, a range of physiological and psychological methods of reducing and inhibiting sexual arousal in paedophiles are employed (McConville, 1981, Yaffé, 1981). Many studies have considered the perceived effectiveness of surgical castration. Bradford (1988, cited in Howitt, 1995) noted a 4% recidivism rate for paedophiles who had been castrated compared to 60% for those who had not. A common alternative to such a drastic and infrequently used surgical procedure is the use of libido suppressants and chemical castration through the administration of drugs. Psychological treatments include classical conditioning (Beech et al, 1971), operant conditioning (Wong et al, 1982), aversion therapy, with the use of electric shocks as punishment (Marshall, 1973), covert sensitisation, with psychologically disturbing fantasies as punishment (Barlow et al, 1969, cited in Yaffé, 1981, Barnard et al, 1989), orgasmic reconditioning (Laws, 1985), satiation (Marshall, 1973) and addiction control programmes (Wyre, 1987), all with varying and often inconclusive success rates.

The offence of paedophilia is associated with increased recidivism and specialisation in the method of offending and victim targeted when compared to other interpersonal offences (Groth, 1979a, Blackburn, 1993). Marshall and Barbaree (1990) reported a 43% recidivism rate for paedophiles who had been incarcerated but had not received any form of physiological or psychological treatment, compared to 18% for those who had received some form of treatment. Like many researchers, Fisher and Thornton (1993, cited in Howitt, 2002) claim that each paedophile varies in terms of potential to reoffend. Once again, studies which have attempted to determine the effectiveness of treatments for paedophilia often rely on information from convicted paedophiles in sex offender treatment programmes. It is vital to be wary of establishing patterns of behaviour and effectiveness using samples drawn from correctional or clinical populations. They may reflect the offenders' efforts to convince prison or mental health authorities of their readiness to be released (Conte, 1985).

**Victimology**

Research has also endeavoured to identify the typical characteristics of victims of paedophilia. Several studies have suggested that paedophilia victims are most likely
to be girls, with boys representing approximately one third of victims (Finkelhor, 1979, 1985, La Fontaine, 1990). However, research has also considered the potential impact of the value of male self-reliance and the stigma of homosexuality on the reporting of male-object paedophilia. The increased risk of genital damage and pregnancy for female victims may also have a bearing on perceived paedophilia victimisation rates (La Fontaine, 1990). The peak age group for male and female victims has been cited as 7-12 years, with a median of 8-years for boys and 11-years for girls (Mohr et al, 1964). The observation that male victims of paedophilia tend to be younger is supported by the American Humane Association, who concluded that 32% of male victims and 18% of female victims are under the age of six, while 26% of male victims and 47% of female victims are at least 13-years-old (Finkelhor, 1984).

The sexual abuse of girls is more frequently located in the middle classes, while boys typically become victims in the lower classes and in single-parent households (Finkelhor, 1984). Female victims are more vulnerable to abusers within the family, particularly stepfathers, while male victims are more likely to be victimised by non-family members, for example, friends of the family, youth workers and scoutmasters (Barnard et al, 1989). With regard to the short- and long-term effects of paedophilia on the victims, a number of studies have suggested that the repercussions of paedophile victimisation include severe emotional damage (Browne and Finkelhor, 1986, cited in Feldman, 1993), fear, guilt, hostility, anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, inability to trust others, post traumatic stress disorder, school difficulties, eating disorders, self-destructive behaviour, impaired sexual adjustment, prostitution, delinquency and the risk of a 'cycle of abuse' as discussed previously (Finkelhor, 1984).

Despite the evident theoretical and methodological flaws associated with much paedophile research, studies have generated an array of intriguing theories in response to the following questions: Why does an individual seek a child as a sexual partner? Is there more than one 'type' of paedophile? If so, what are their distinguishing characteristics? How do you diagnose a suspected paedophile and 'cure' a convicted one? What are the effects of paedophile victimisation for the victim? However, there seems to be a noteworthy gap in the research. Given that few can understand the
motivations of the paedophile, 'universally condemned' as the most abhorrent of sex offenders (La Fontaine, 1990, p.21) and that pro-paedophilia publications clearly employ a diverse range of justifications for the sexual abuse of children, there is an distinct lack of research which examines how paedophiles account for their activities.

**Justification and the role of cognitive distortions**

The only concept within the remit of experimental psychology to broach the notion of the paedophile defence is cognitive distortions. In a sample of 94 convicted paedophiles invited to explain why they had been incarcerated, Underwager and Wakefield (1999) observed that 11% denied the allegations, 12% admitted the offence from the onset and the remaining 77% admitted yet *minimised* the extent of their offending. The paedophiles' distinctive ability to rationalise their activities has been attributed to distorted cognitive reasoning (Abel et al, 1984, Barbaree, 2001, Durkin and Bryant, 1999, Marshall et al, 2001, Rogers and Dickey, 1991, Ward et al, 1997, Winn, 1996). The paedophile selectively attends to information which construes the child as holding similar sexual desires, minimises the seriousness of the abuse and permits them to deny responsibility for their behaviour (Wright and Schneider, 1999). This selective attention is reinforced by the discounting of inconsistent information. Cognitive distortions function in the commission and post-event rationalisation of child sexual offences. They represent an entire set of beliefs that justify sex between a child and an adult, enabling paedophiles to overcome their inhibitions and repeatedly engage in deviant behaviours:

- A child who does not physically resist really wants sex.
- Having sex with a child is a good way of teaching the child about sex.
- Children don't tell about sex with an adult because they really enjoy it.
- Sometime in the future our society will realise that sex with children is really all right.
- An adult who feels a child’s genitals is not really being sexual with the child, so no harm is being done.
- When a child asks about sex it means that the child wants to see the adult’s sex organs or have sex with the adult.
- A relationship with the child is enhanced by having sex with him/her.

(Adapted from Abel et al, 1984)

These attempts to justify paedophilia by minimising components of the incident have been likened to paedophile ‘neutralisation’ (deYoung, 1988, 1989). The content
analysis of newsletters published by the North American paedophile organisations NAMBLA, the Childhood Sensuality Circle and the Rene Guyon Society between 1981-1984 identified four devices used by paedophiles to ‘disavow a deviant identity and normalise law-breaking behaviour so as to make it more palatable or even acceptable to the law-abiding public’ (1988, p.585). The publications utilised (1) denial of injury, redefining adult sexual behaviour with children in positive terms by claiming that prohibiting children from engaging in sexual behaviour with adults is more harmful, (2) denial of victim, the child is reconceptualised as a ‘willing partner’ having encouraged or instigated the sexual contact, (3) condemnation of the condemners, in which negative sanctions received by the paedophile organisation are redirected to the larger society that condemns them and (4) appeal to higher loyalties, the organisations claim that they are striving to liberate children from the sexually repressive bonds of society, presenting themselves as organisations with goals more legitimate than advocating sex with children.

The concept of paedophile neutralisation was supported by the ‘dance of denial’ observed by Happel and Auffrey (1995) in a sample of convicted child molesters. Happel and Auffrey noted that accounts of paedophilic offences commonly incorporated six devices, (1) denial of facts, claiming that the offence did not occur or that it happened ‘only once’, (2) denial of awareness, refuting conscious knowledge of the incident by introducing an alcohol blackout or memory lapse and (3) denial of impact, ignoring or minimising the physical and emotional ramifications of the abuse for the child. The descriptions provided by the offenders also involved (4) denial of responsibility, blaming the victim, a spouse or psychological mitigators, (5) denial of grooming oneself and the environment, denying contextual planning and premeditation and (6) denial of deviant sexual arousal, refuting the role of fantasy and sexual pleasure. This misperception in the way paedophiles perceive their activities creates an interpretive framework with which they can redefine child sexual abuse as something acceptable and consensual (Howitt, 1995), construe their victims as willing and ultimately justify their offending behaviour.

Following a preoccupation with cataloguing and quantifying the justifications of convicted offenders, the work of Pollock and Hashmall (1991) represents a tentative move towards outlining the performative function of justifications in more individual
accounts of paedophilia. Pollock and Hashmall extracted 250 justificatory statements from the clinical records of 86 male paedophiles aged between 16-73 years, referred for psychiatric assessment following conviction for sexually assaulting children. It was concluded that paedophiles utilise a limited range of reasons for having sexual contact with children. While 21% of the sample denied the allegations outright, the remaining 79% accounted for their offending behaviour by providing some form of justification. This offers support for Underwager and Wakefield (1999), who claimed that 77% of their sample of convicted paedophiles admitted, whilst striving to minimise, their offending. Of the 86 paedophiles examined by Pollock and Hashmall, 22% claimed that the victim had initiated the incident, 35% portrayed the incident as entirely nonsexual, 35% blamed psychological mitigators for the offence, 36% argued that sexual contact with children was not wrong and 48% blamed situational mitigators:

Figure 1: Schematic diagram of paedophile's justifications for child sexual assault.

(Adapted from Pollock and Hashmall, 1991)
Offenders have often attempted to redefined abuse as something desired by the child, "some little girls are very seductive and promiscuous" or affectionate, "I'm not hurting the child, just showing love" (Jenkins-Hall, 1989, cited in Howitt, 1995, p.93). Claims that the abuse was an accident are also common, "One offender told me that the abuse of his daughter happened when he turned round and his penis just went in her mouth" (Wyre, 1989, p.19). However, once again there is a reliance on information derived from convicted offenders and paedophiles in sex offender treatment programmes. An ideal investigation would be to examine the active accounts and explanations of a sample of non-incarcerated paedophiles.

Concluding remarks

To summarise, a number of studies have identified a distinctive self-serving discourse characteristic of pro-paedophile propaganda and the accounts of incarcerated offenders. It is evident that paedophiles employ a language of emotion, mutuality and affection to describe relationships between adults and children. However, these studies have been preoccupied with quantifying and categorising isolated criteria and have failed to explore how these perpetrators use such constructions of adult-child relationships to explain their activities. It is vital that the implications of such justificatory language are examined in context, particularly contexts which rely on the factual reporting of criminal events. For example, if paedophiles are to be prosecuted, it is vital that police officers are capable of sifting through the romantic, self-serving descriptions of adult-child relationships to obtain precise details of sexual acts for the purpose of conviction.
CHAPTER 3

POLICE INTERVIEWING AND SUSPECT ADMISSION

The evolution of the police interview in the UK

*The police interrogation*

Interviewing is one of the most important fact-finding methods the police have at their disposal when investigating crime (Gudjonsson, 1992). The first training manual to provide standardised interviewing strategies for police officers was ‘Criminal Interrogation and Confessions’ (Inbau *et al*, 1986), which originated in the US. The manual documents nine steps for the effective interrogation of suspects, also known as the ‘Reid technique’. These nine step comprise (1) direct positive confrontation, (2) theme development, (3) handling denials, (4) overcoming objections, (5) procurement and retention of the suspect’s attention, (6) handling suspect’s passive mood, (7) presenting an alternative question, (8) having suspects orally relate various details of the offence and (9), converting an oral confession into a written confession. The steps emphasise the role of the interrogator as the authoritative, dominant component of an interaction characterised by direct confrontation, overcoming denial and the prime objective of eliciting a confession (Sear and Williamson, 1999).

The second technique for effective police interrogation, ‘theme development’, has been divided into the strategies of ‘maximisation’ and ‘minimisation’ by Kassin and McNall (1991). Interrogative minimisation involves reducing the suspects’ feelings of guilt for the offence by diminishing the moral seriousness of the charge, for example by suggesting that the involvement of the suspect in the crime has been exaggerated or that ‘anyone else under similar conditions or circumstances might have done the same thing’ (p.97). This tactic retains the suspects’ self-respect whilst encouraging confession. Interrogative maximization represents the act of intimidating the suspect into confessing by exaggerating the seriousness of the offence and the magnitude of the charges. Interrogators are encouraged to overstate the amount and strength of
evidence indicating guilt, convincing the suspect of the futility of denying involvement. Sear and Williamson (1999) also claim that by maximising the impending emotional release following admission, ‘you’ll feel better if you just tell me...’ (p.76), the interrogator can persuade an emotional suspect to acknowledge accountability for a criminal act.

The role of coercive questioning
The inherent interrogative bias of Inbau et al’s controversial nine steps for effective interrogation is maintained by legitimised accusatory questioning, ‘which may involve trickery and deceit’ (Inbau et al, 1986, p.xii). There is a preference for cross-examination questioning, ‘in which the context of the questions or the manner in which they are asked implies guilt’ (Irving, 1980, p.7). Police interrogations incorporate the use of statements, where the interrogator invites the suspect to confirm a given ‘fact’, closed questions, limiting the response of the suspect to yes or no, leading questions which provide the desired answer in the question and multiple questions, incorporating two or more topics in one question. This enables the interrogator to control the interview, minimising what they perceive to be irrelevant information (Milne and Bull, 1999). Interrogative interviewing also induces passivity in the interviewee, as ‘suspects are discouraged from initiating conversation, asking questions or answering back’ (Irving and Hilgendorf, 1980, p.24).

Fisher et al (1987) examined a series of tape-recorded interrogations conducted by experienced US detectives trained using the guidelines of Inbau et al. Despite initially inviting each suspect to provide a free narrative at the onset of the interrogation, the interrogators interrupted the speakers after an average of 7.5 seconds. None of the suspects were permitted to complete their narratives. Fisher et al noted that after being interrupted several times, the suspects expected this to occur throughout the remainder of the interrogation and tailored their responses to fit the time constraints set by the police officers. The interviewees were also subjected to unstructured, excessive and short-answer questions as the interrogators ‘created the structure of the interview’ (p.3).

Interrogatory techniques originating in the US were later adopted by police forces in the UK. In a Home Office Research Unit observational study of 187 police
interrogations conducted at four British police stations, Sofley (1980) concluded that 60% of police officers employed a range of persuasive tactics comparable to those documented in US police training manuals. Of the 60%, 40% of the police officers used the threat of custodial confinement as a mean of persuasion, 33% advised the suspects that it was in their best interests to confess and 23% made promises relating to police discretion. Sofley also revealed interrogative strategies akin to Inbau et al’s maximisation and minimisation (Kassin and McNall, 1991). Fifty percent of the police officers who employed persuasive tactics emphasised the futility of denying involvement in the offence, 15% inferred that additional damning evidence would be forthcoming, 13% made frequent reference to the overwhelming evidence against the suspects and 6% minimised the seriousness of the offence or the suspect’s role in the offence. US interrogatory techniques later formed the basis of a British manual, ‘Police interrogation: A handbook for investigators’ (Walkley, 1987).

It is argued that each police-suspect interrogation is fundamentally oppressive due to the presence of authority, the isolation of the suspect and the element of uncertainty surrounding the police enquiry (Gudjonsson and Clark, 1986). However, given the evidence of interrogative manipulation, coercive questioning and the suggestion that police interrogations are more about ‘compliance, obedience and manipulating the suspect’s view of his options’ than seeking information (Irving, 1980, p.44), it is not surprising that interrogations have been portrayed as impinging on the fundamental rights of the suspect (Zimbardo, 1967, cited in Milne and Bull, 1999).

Miscarriages of justice and false confessions
The interrogative manipulation associated with US style interviewing practices has significant implications for judicial injustice, particularly in English law where defendants can be convicted based on uncorroborated confessions (Gudjonsson, 1992). Two pertinent examples of wrongful conviction in the UK are the ‘Guildford Four’ and the ‘Birmingham Six’. The ‘Guildford Four’, three Irish men and one English woman, were wrongfully sentenced to life imprisonment in 1974 for terrorist offences following the IRA bombings of two public houses in Guildford, Surrey. The individuals were convicted on the basis of confessions made during custodial interrogation and under duress. Fifteen years later, their sentences were quashed. The ‘Birmingham Six’ were Irish men wrongfully sentenced to life imprisonment in 1974.
for the terrorist bombings of two public houses in Birmingham. They were convicted based on off-the-record verbal admissions and signed confessions following severe physical assaults. Their sentences were overturned almost 17 years later.

Leo and Ofshe (1998) noted that, in the US, 9% of suspects convicted on the basis of false confessions were arrested by the police before being released, 43% were prosecuted but the cases were subsequently dismissed and 48% received criminal convictions. Of those who were convicted, 17% received custodial sentences over 10 years and 5% received death sentences, with 2% executed before their innocence was established. In 1987, the rate of individuals wrongfully executed in the US was estimated at 7% (Bedau and Radelet, 1987). In the same year, taking into consideration type of offence and rates of wrongful arrest, detention, interrogation and conviction, 93% of murder suspects and 7% of rape suspects in the US (Bedau and Radelet, 1987) and 43% of murder suspects and 12% of rape suspects in the UK (Rattner, 1988) were victims of miscarriages of justice. Bedau and Radelet identified the most common cause of wrongful convictions in the US in the last century to be false confessions as a consequence of coercive questioning, while in the UK, Rattner ranked false confessions second only to mistaken eyewitness identifications.

It is necessary to acknowledge that false confessions are not always a consequence of persuasive interrogative techniques, such as those involved in the wrongful convictions of the Guildford Four and the Birmingham Six. Kassin and Wrightsman (1985) differentiate coerced confessions from voluntary confessions, which are purposefully offered in the absence of police pressure to protect others or satisfy a pathological need for attention. Kassin and Wrightsman describe confessions induced by manipulative police interviewing practices as coerced-compliant and coerced-internalised. The coerced-compliant confession is produced when the suspect succumbs to the pressures of the interrogative process and the demands of interrogator for immediate instrumental gain. For example, the suspect may be persuaded to confess following promises of leniency or to escape the distress of prolonged accusations, whilst failing to acknowledge the long-term consequences of the confession. The coerced-internalised or ‘persuaded’ confession (Leo and Ofshe, 1998) occur when suspects distrust their own recollections, often as a result of
amnesia, confusion or alcohol-induced memory problems, and are made to believe that they have committed the crime of which they are being accused.

The issue of coerced false confession has significant implications for individuals with intellectual disabilities. Gudjonsson (1992) established a link between below average intelligence and the extent to which people comply with coercive questioning. The increased use of leading, closed-format questioning in the interrogation, the more susceptible the 'mentally retarded defendant-offender' to suggestibility and distortion (Richard et al, 1965, cited in Gudjonsson, 1992).

It is important to bear in mind that, although persons who are mentally disordered or mentally handicapped are often capable of providing reliable evidence, they may, without knowing or wishing to do so, be particularly prone in certain circumstances to providing information which is unreliable, misleading or self-incriminating.

(Gudjonsson, 1992, p.77)

To summarise, the coercive questioning of a suspect renders any confession obtained inherently unreliable and unethical. It has been argued that many miscarriages of justice have arisen from an unduly adversarial position adopted by the police (Sear and Williamson, 1999).

**The emergence of the PEACE investigative interview**

Due to the anxiety-inducing effects of the traditional police interrogation, the implicit elements of threat and coercion and the increased risk of wrongful conviction, British police interviewing required an extreme transformation (Moston and Stephenson, 1993). In 1986, new legislation governed by the advent of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) of 1984 required the tape-recording of all police interviews with the intention of maximising the reliability of confession evidence and diminishing the oppression of suspects (Hutton and Johnston, 2001). However, it was not until 1992 that a joint venture between the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and the Home Office Steering Group emerged with a view to standardising an interviewing training programme for use by all British police forces.

The development of the PEACE investigative interview, the rationale for which is outlined in 'A Practical Guide to Investigative Interviewing' (2000), was a
consequence of the research of Shepherd (1991). Shepherd asserted that an ethical interview should be *inquisitorial*, representing a transition from the traditional adversarial nature of police interrogations to a universal search for information. By reducing oppression and communicating respect for the person being interviewed, Shepherd ensured that the investigative interview schedule was suitable for the interviewing of witnesses, victims and suspects. In terms of the appropriate speech of the investigative interview, it is stated that the interviewing officer’s language ‘should remain conversational’ (‘A Practical Guide’, 2000, p.51) and that the offence ‘must be described in ordinary language’ (p.121).

The five phases of the investigative interview are indicated by the PEACE mnemonic; Planning and preparation, Engage and explain, Account, clarification and challenge, Closure and Evaluation. The first stage is ‘Planning and preparation’, prior to the onset of the interview, in which the objectives of the investigation and the needs of the interviewee are determined. Once the interview has commenced, the next stage of the investigative interview is ‘Engage and explain’, where the interviewer establishes rapport with the interviewee and explains the purpose of the interview. During the ‘Account, clarification and challenge’ stage of the investigative interview, the police officer invites the interviewee to ‘give an uninterrupted account of everything they know about the matter under investigation’ (‘A Practical Guide’, p.56) using open and fair questioning. The use of open-ended questions encourages the interviewee to generate a full, unrestricted response, minimising the risk of the interviewer imposing his or her view of what happened (Milne and Bull, 1999).

It is imperative that you avoid using leading questions, so as not to mislead the interviewee and plant a false memory...Multiple questions i.e. asking more than one question at the same time, may cause confusion for the interviewee...Changing topics prematurely before the interviewee has fully exhausted the all the detail they can or wish to give, is distracting and counterproductive.


‘A Practical Guide’ also states that the interviewing officer must provide sufficient time for the interviewee to respond to the questions, ‘you should give the interviewee their turn to talk and the time to do so...Remember that it is always the interviewee's version of events that you want’ (p.31). The construction of the account is enhanced by the police officer’s use of non-intrusive probing, introduced and phrased
depending on the circumstances of the interview and the needs of the interviewee (Mortimer, 1994). The fourth stage is ‘Closure’ where the interviewer explains to the interviewee about the proposed course of events following the interview. The final stage of the investigative interview is ‘Evaluation’, where the interviewer assesses the significance of the interview within the context of the investigation.

Research on police interviewing

The cognitive interview

One component of the PEACE investigative interview protocol, which has received considerable research interest, is the Cognitive Interview (CI). The CI was developed as a method of enhancing memory retrieval in witnesses and victims of crime in the investigative interview (Geiselmau et al, 1984). The CI schedule incorporates four guidelines to maximise the quality and quantity of information elicited (Fisher et al, 1989). Primarily, the interviewee must report everything, with no editing of information, regardless of which details may seem trivial or irrelevant. The mental reinstatement of context encourages the interviewee to reconstruct the witnessed event using all available emotional, sensory and environmental contextual cues. By recalling the event in different orders, for example, both chronologically and reversed, the witness can access script inconsistent information. Finally, by changing perspectives, the interviewee can increase detail by recalling the event from the point of view of another witness who was present.

There have been numerous empirical studies seeking to evaluate the effectiveness of the CI as a method of improving witness and victim testimony. Experiments comparing the quantity of information obtained by individuals trained in CI techniques and control groups trained in standard interviewing procedures have observed increased recall of 40% in participants interviewed using the CI (Fisher and Geiselman, 1992). With regard to the quality of the information retrieved, in both studies the enhanced recollection of correct information was not accompanied by an increase in incorrect detail. Geiselman et al (1984) staged an unexpected event during a lecture comprising a sample of 16 undergraduate students. Two days later, the
participants were randomly assigned to two interview conditions. The first group were questioned about the incident by fellow students trained in CI techniques and the second group were questioned by students using standard interviewing. It was concluded that significantly more correct details were recalled by the students in the CI group than in the control group, 69 ‘facts’ compared to 56, with no accompanying increase in error. These findings were supported in a follow-up study utilising students who had witnessed crime-related video footage (Geiselman et al, 1986).

Few studies have conducted field observations to establish the effectiveness of the CI. In the US, Fisher et al (1987) observed a 63% increase in information retrieved from witnesses interviewed by police officers with CI training, compared with those using standard police interviewing. In the UK, these findings were supported to an extent by George (1991, cited in Kebbell and Wagstaff, 1999), who noted an improvement of 14% in the information recalled by witnesses interviewed using CI techniques. There is a consensus that the CI markedly increases the accuracy and completeness of witness and victim accounts of criminal events.

Recent research has also documented the development of the Enhanced Cognitive Interview (ECI), characterised by the addition of six conversational management guidelines to the four original guidelines of the CI. These additional guidelines are establishing rapport, transferring control to witness, asking questions compatible with witness’ mental operations, encouraging witness to use focused retrieval, and encouraging witness to use imagery (Milne and Bull, 1999). Empirical research has suggested that the ECI further improves recall in laboratory conditions. In a replication of the research of Geiselman et al (1986), Fisher et al (1989) randomly assigned undergraduate students who had witnessed staged crime-related events to three interview conditions. The first group were questioned using ECI techniques, the second group by the CI and the third group using standard interviewing. It was concluded that the ECI elicited 45% more correct information than the CI and 75% more correct information than the standard interview.
The investigative interviewing of vulnerable witnesses

There is a wealth of contemporary research on the implications of witness and victim vulnerability on investigative interviewing, specifically, the impact of interrogative suggestibility and the maximisation of recall in adults with learning disabilities and children.

Interviewing adults with learning disabilities

There is evidence to suggest that adults with learning disabilities are increasingly susceptible to interrogative suggestibility, particularly as a consequence of the perceived authority of the interviewing officer (Perlman et al, 1994). Perlman et al observed a desire for compliance in interviewees with below average intellectual abilities and concluded that such witnesses were more likely to concur with misleading suggestions. With regard to problems with police questioning, Ericson et al (1994) claimed that individuals with developmental deficiencies have difficulty with the use of personal pronouns (he, she, they), compound questions and the shifting of topics. Sigelman et al (1981) noted significant brevity and recurring affirmatives in response to closed yes/no questions.

However, it is a myth that adults with learning disabilities cannot construct competent witness testimonies. Perlman et al (1994) observed that individuals with below average intelligence invited to ‘free recall’ an account of a crime-related film generated more elaborate and accurate responses. Interviewees provided even more detail when also given the opportunity to state an either/or as opposed to a yes/no response (Cardone and Dent, 1996, Sigelman et al, 1981). There is also evidence that witnesses with learning disabilities benefit from the application of cognitive interviewing techniques, particularly contextual reinstatement, the harnessing of emotional, sensory and environmental cues associated with the crime (Isaacs et al, 1998, cited in Milne and Bull, 1999).

Interviewing children

Child witnesses and victims are increasing called upon to submit evidence in criminal investigations. However, allegations have also been made about the reliability of information extracted from the memories of children. Children’s memories of
experienced events have been described as 'sparse and incoherent' (Cohen et al., 1986), with recall suffering from diminished accuracy and endurance compared to adolescents and adults (Goodman et al., 1987). Lamb et al. (1999) claimed that children are particularly prone to recalling imaginary events as factual and, due to underdeveloped language skills, are less able to communicate their recollections. Davies (1991) attributed decreased recall in children to a lack of awareness of scripted actions and behaviours, knowledge which facilitates memory processing, encoding and retrieval by helping individuals contextualise new experiences and observations.

Claims have also been made regarding the susceptibility of children to interrogative suggestibility, 'children can indeed be led to make false or inaccurate reports about very crucial, personally experienced, central events' (Ceci and Bruck, 1993, p. 432). Researchers argue that, like adults with learning disabilities, children are significantly more responsive to the expectations of individuals in authority (Moston, 1990). Children also have problems with certain types of questioning, for example, the use of negative statements, as in 'Is it not true that you stole the apples?' and passive wording, 'Was the apple taken by her?' (Lamb et al., 1999). Repetitive questioning has been perceived as potentially contaminating, encouraging compliance by implying that previous answers are unacceptable (Underwager and Wakefield, 1995). Children under the age of seven also have particular difficulties with pronouns (he, she, they) and references to abstract terms and linear measurements are beyond the cognitive abilities of many young children (Saywitz et al., 1994).

However, the view that children are not capable of recalling much that is forensically relevant has been thoroughly contested, 'young children, solely by virtue of their age, should not be deemed incompetent to testify' (Milne and Bull, 1999, p.130). There is considerable evidence that children can produce accurate accounts of events if interviewed appropriately. Many studies have recognised the benefits of interviewing child witnesses using open questioning (Howitt, 2002). Open questions have yielded replies from children four times longer and with three times more new detail than closed questions (Sternberg et al., 1997). Underwager and Wakefield (1995) supported the assertion that police interviewers should employ open-ended questions to encourage children to provide free narratives. They also confirmed that children
who were advised by investigating officers that 'I don't know' and 'I don't remember' were perfectly acceptable responses made 46% fewer identification mistakes and were 21% less susceptible to misleading questions.

There is also an indication that child witnesses benefit from the application of CI techniques. Geiselman and Padilla (1988) claimed that children recall 21% more information when cognitively interviewed when compared to standard interviewing methods. These findings were upheld by Saywitz et al (1992) who observed an increase in the recall of accurate information by child witnesses, 26% for 7-11 years olds and 32% for 8-12 year olds. Recent research by Holliday (2002) compared the effectiveness of the CI with a structured interview (SI) in facilitating the recall of children. Following a 5-minute video, two randomly assigned groups were interviewed using either the CI or the SI to establish the accuracy of memory. Holliday concluded that the CI elicited more correct details than the SI.

There has been considerable research on the use of anatomically correct dolls and drawing in the police interviewing of children. Boat and Everson (1988) claim that such props are effective cues for memory retrieval, whilst ensuring that all information originates from the child. In investigations of sexual abuse, a child who does not possess the linguistic ability to describe experiences of victimisation can use anatomically correct dolls to demonstrate physical contact or draw a picture to indicate parts of the body, expressing non-verbally what they remember to substantiate the claims (Howitt, 2002).

However, there is considerable disagreement in the professional community as to whether these methods should be used. DeLoache (1995, cited in Underwager and Wakefield, 1995) argues that children do not possess the development maturity to use anatomically correct dolls as symbolic representations of themselves and therefore cannot use the dolls to enact their own experiences. There is little empirical evidence to suggest that anatomically correct dolls and drawings reliably identify victims of abuse as non-abused children also engage anatomically correct dolls in sexual play.
The investigative interviewing of suspects

_A prevailing confession culture_

There is a wealth of research that claims to have identified methods of enhancing the reliability of witness and victim testimonies. However, few studies have explored effective methods of interviewing suspects and increasing the reliability of confession evidence. In fact, literature suggests that there is a limited transference of the principles of investigative interviewing to the questioning of suspected offenders. Despite the implementation of standardised investigative interviewing in 1992 and concerns for ethical questioning and diminishing suspect oppression, there remains a ‘confession culture’ in British police forces. This confession culture, a consequence of the need for rapid results in criminal investigations (Mortimer, 1994), is characterised by the pervasive use of interrogatory techniques.

In an evaluation of the investigative interviewing of suspects, Moston et al (1992) analysed 400 tape-recorded interviews conducted by detectives with suspects in the post-PEACE Metropolitan Police Force and gathered substantial evidence of the implementation of PEACE objectives. However, Moston et al also noted a penchant for the confession-seeking elements of the interrogation, characterised by closed questioning and accusations. These findings were supported by Williamson (1993), who interviewed 80 detectives from four Inner London police stations. When invited to indicate the purpose of the police-suspect investigative interview, 38% of the sample stated ‘to get to the truth’, 24% ‘to seek an explanation’, 12% ‘to obtain a confession’ and 10% ‘to get evidence’. Moston and Stephenson (1993) claimed that 80% of a sample of police officers in Britain cited ‘confessions’ as the main purpose of interviewing a suspect. Despite verbal support for PEACE objectives, 91% of British police interviewers employed accusatorial tactics when interviewing suspects (Mortimer, 1994).

Interrogatory tactics currently employed by UK police forces have included leading questioning, purportedly used in 20% of police interviews (McConville and Hodgson, 1993) and requesting that suspects respond to accusations, rather than inviting an
account of events from the suspect (Milne and Bull, 1999). Pearse and Gudjonsson (1996) analysed 161 police-suspect investigative interviews in two south London police stations. Despite the use of open questioning in 98% of the interviews, the sample of police officers also employed leading questions in 73% of cases. In a recent national evaluation of PEACE investigative interviewing prompted by the Home Office, Clarke and Milne (2001) analysed 177 police interviews from six police forces in England and Wales. It was noted that ‘open questions’, a fundamental component of the investigative interview, had an average occurrence of 13.1 per interview, however, the average for ‘closed questions’ was 15.4, ‘statements’ 6.7, ‘leading questions’ 3.8, and ‘overtalking’ 1.0.

Research into the investigative interviewing of suspects has identified two styles of interviewing prevalent in contemporary policing; the ethical, information-seeking PEACE interview and an apparent return to confession-seeking interrogations. These two styles of police interviewing have particular implications for the freedom and latitude of response afforded to the suspect (Couling, 1988, cited in Mortimer, 1992). However, previous research has been limited to monitoring the existence of open, closed and leading questions. There is an obvious need for an empirical investigation into the effects of different police interviewing techniques on suspect testimony.
Theories of confession

There are a number of explanations which attempt to identify the psychological processes that facilitate confession during custodial interrogation. In an appendix of 'Criminal Interrogation and Confessions' (Inbau et al, 1986), Jayne examined why the controversial 'Reid technique' successfully elicited confessions in suspects. Jayne claimed that the goal of an interrogation is 'to decrease the suspect's perception of the consequences of confessing, while at the same time increasing the suspect's internal anxiety associated with his deception' (p.332). By using the nine steps for effective interrogation, police officers can increase the suspect's anxiety by utilising maximisation and oppression while decreasing the perceived consequences of confession through the use of minimisation. When the consequences of admitting the offence are more desirable than the anxiety generated by the deception, the suspect confesses.

The decision-making model of confession (Hilgendorf and Irving, 1981) states that suspects evaluate the gains and liabilities associated with possible courses of action. These gains and liabilities are determined by social, psychological and environmental factors and the decision to confess is governed by the subjective probabilities of these perceived outcomes. For example, the police interviewer can depict confession as a means of ceasing the immediate anxiety of the police interview and diminishing the likelihood of an arduous court case. In the cognitive-behavioural model (Gudjonsson, 1992), confession is viewed in terms of 'antecedents', triggers prior to and during the interrogation which precipitate confession. These antecedents comprise social events (isolation, social reinforcement, praise), emotional events (uncertainty, guilt, potential relief), cognitive events (expectations of police violence, belief in strength of evidence), situational events (time of day, length of interview, familiarity with criminal proceedings) and physiological events (increased blood pressure, heart rate and perspiration).

Reik (1959) proposed a psychoanalytic model of confession and claimed that the compulsion to confess, guilt after transgression and the unconscious need for self-punishment are universal traits in all individuals. Reik argued that confession arises from internal conflict and guilt, 'an attempt at reconciliation that the superego
undertakes in order to settle the quarrel between the ego and the id’ (p.216). However, despite this intriguing premise, psychoanalytic models suffer from a lack of empirical support. Moston et al (1992) argued that the outcome of an interrogation is a consequence of the interaction between the background variables of the suspect (age, severity of offence, type of offence, gender of suspect, personality traits) and contextual characteristics (legal advice, strength of evidence, interrogation techniques, interrogators attitudes, style of questioning). The interaction process model of confession claims that the individual characteristics of a suspect can influence the police officer’s style of questioning, which in turn affects the suspect’s behaviour and determines the consequences of the interview.

Rates of admission

There have been few estimates of admission rates for suspects during police investigative interviews in the UK. There is contention regarding definitions of admission, as surveys have used the terms ‘admission’, ‘damaging statement’, ‘self incrimination’ and ‘confession’ interchangeably. Subsequently, for the purpose of clarity, this section will incorporate all of the previous definitions for admission.

Table 5: UK admission rates for suspects during police interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Sample size</th>
<th>Admission rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Irving (1980)</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Softley (1980)</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irving &amp; McKenzie (1989)</td>
<td>1986-68</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1987-68</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moston et al (1992)</td>
<td>1067</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Despite evidence of a contemporary confession culture, rates of admission have decreased. It is feasible that the post-PACE implementation of tape-recording in police interviews has restricted police officers in the types of interviewing techniques they employ (Irving and McKenzie, 1989). Irving and McKenzie attribute the decline in suspect admission to the dramatic reduction of coercive interrogation tactics.
Suspect characteristics and admission

Research has explored the impact of the characteristics of the suspect on rates of admission in the police-suspect interview, in particular, the age of the suspect, the possession of a prior criminal record and the type of offence alleged to have been committed. There is a consensus regarding the correlation between admission and the age of the suspect. In the US, Leiken (1970) claimed that 43% of suspects who admitted allegations of criminal behaviour were under the age of 25 years, while 18% were older than 25 years. Baldwin and McConville (1980) obtained comparable results in the UK and concluded that admission rates for interviewed suspects were 62% for those under the age of 21 years, 48% for suspects aged between 21-29 years, 34% for suspects aged between 30-39 years and 32% for those over 40 years. These findings were collaborated by Softley (1980) who observed an admission rate of 68% for suspects in the UK under the age of 21 and 53% for those over 21 years.

However, there is limited agreement regarding the links between suspect admission and previous convictions or the type of offence committed. In support of the premise that admissions of criminal activity are more frequent for suspects with no prior criminal record are Neubauer (1974) and Softley (1980). Neubauer (1974) examined police interrogations with suspects in the US and concluded that 60% of suspects with no criminal record admitted the allegations, compared to 36% of those with previous convictions. In the UK, Softley (1980) noted that 76% of suspects with no criminal record provided an admission, compared to 59% of suspects with prior convictions. However, in a comparative analysis of suspect testimonies in the US and the UK, Baldwin and McConville (1980) observed US admission rates of 45% for suspects without a criminal record and 50% with a criminal record and UK admission rates of 36% for those with no criminal record and 55% for suspects with convictions.

In terms of the relationship between frequency of admission and offence type, estimates vary in relation to geographical location and time period. Individuals suspected of committing property offences in the US provided admissions in 56% of cases (Neubauer, 1974) with rates in the UK at 31% for London and 43% for Birmingham (Baldwin and McConville, 1980). In the US, rates of admission for those suspected of crimes against the person have been estimated at 32% (Neubauer, 1974), compared to 32% for London and 34% for Birmingham (Baldwin and McConville,
The lower admission rates for crimes against the person could be due to the harsher punishment assigned to perpetrators of interpersonal offences. In addition, the accessibility of physical evidence in cases of property crime, for example, surveillance footage, fingerprints and stolen goods, may increase rates of confession. However, in a more recent survey, Mitchell (1983) observed that, while property offences were associated with an admission rate of 79% and non-sexual violence with an admission rate of 53%, suspects alleged to have committed sexual offences admitted the allegations in 89% of cases, a conclusion not in concurrence with the previous findings.

Interviewing characteristics and admission

There have been several tentative efforts to identify features of the police-suspect interaction which correlate with rates of suspect admission. Shepherd (1991) stated that the police officer should seek to obtain an initial uninterrupted narrative from the suspect and then examine this account in detail during the investigative interview to maximise the likelihood of admission. Mortimer (1994) also claimed that the interviewer should acquire an account from the suspect, which should be listened to without interruption. An inventory of ‘good’ police interviewing practices associated with suspect admission was compiled by Howitt (2002), which included the appropriate use of pauses and silences, communication skills, the development of rapport, knowledge of the law, open-mindedness, planning and preparation. ‘Bad’ police interviewing practices linked to denial incorporated the use of tactics, closure, generating apprehension, inappropriate interruptions, leading questions, over-talking and undue pressure.

In a Home Office evaluation of PEACE investigative interviewing, Clarke and Milne (2001) correlated suspect response with the duration of the interview. Interviews incorporating suspect denial were an average of 16 minutes in length, interviews which included brief confessions, for example ‘I did it’, with no elaboration, were an average of 15 minutes in length and comprehensive confessions had an average duration of 23 minutes. However, the investigation failed to taken into consideration the spoken contributions of the two interview participants. It would be interesting to explore the discursive characteristics of the prolonged admission interviews to see who exactly is
doing the talking. There is an obvious need for empirical research into the qualitative effects of different police interviewing techniques on suspect admission and denial.

Concluding remarks

The research on police interviewing has failed to explore both the effects of police questioning on rates of admission and denial and the interviewing of different types of offender. There is a distinctive paedophile discourse of minimisation and denial, which strives to reformulate relationships between adults and children as mature, romantic unions with no mention of sexual activity. However, the investigative interview requires that police officers avoid normalising, emotional talk and encourage suspects to discuss their offences in terms of direct, physical detail. Despite the fact that these two conflicting approaches to the description of paedophilic acts have significant implications for eliciting information in the police interview, the research has failed to consider whether paedophiles require specific questioning to enable police officers to reformulate sexual detail and the notion of agency. What is required is a qualitative understanding of the language interactions between the police officer and the suspected paedophile. The next stage of this investigation is to review research which has adopted a detailed linguistic approach to the study of police interviewing.
CHAPTER 4

THE POTENTIAL APPLICATION OF DISCOURSE ANALYSIS
TO INVESTIGATIVE INTERVIEWS WITH SUSPECTED
PAEDOPHILES

The development and application of discursive psychology

Discursive psychology, the theoretical concern with the centrality of talk and text in social life, emerged in opposition to the cognitivist notion of language as an outward manifestation of internal psychological phenomena. Discursive psychologists seek to demonstrate how psychological processes such as emotions, knowledge, memories, attitudes, thoughts and ideas are 'constructed, managed and oriented to' in social activity (Potter, 2000, p.35). These processes should be examined in relation to outward skills directly observed in talk (Billig, 1999). This premise is derived from the views of Wittgenstein, who argued that what is socially involved in making claims about feelings and emotions is to be understood in terms of their usage in observable interactions (1951, cited in Billig, 2001). In addition to being observable in the social interaction, the implications of discourse are also governed by the social context in which it is produced (Lea and Auburn, 2001), 'what people say and how they say it is generally affected by the context in which they are interacting' (Drew, 1990, p.39).

If discursive psychology is a form of theoretical thinking, discourse analysis represents an accompanying methodology. Discourse analysis shares a concern with the performative nature of talk (Auburn and Lea, 2001) and opposes the empiricist preoccupation with abstracting individuals from social activity. Empiricist methodologies employed by cognitivists often rely on the replication of real world phenomena within the confines of a laboratory. Experimenters often monitor the pre-defined responses of participants to fixed-choice questionnaires and vignettes, inviting them to report what they would do in a hypothetical situation (Potter and Wetherell, 1987). Discourse analysts favour the analysis of naturally occurring interactions and
have obtained data from a range of materials including newspaper reports, parliamentary records, counselling sessions and telephone conversations (Potter, 1996a). Discourse analysts are interested in the ways that individuals use language functionally, to achieve certain ends (Wooffitt, 1992). The central tenet of discourse analysis is that talk is always doing something. Billig (1997) claimed that even the most trivial exchanges are rich in meaning as speakers utilise a range of discursive resources to formulate arguments, persuade, blame, explain and justify.

People perform actions of different kinds through their talk...and they accomplish the nature of these actions partly through constructing their discourse out of a range of styles, linguistics resources and rhetorical devices.

(Potter and Wetherell, 1994, p.48)

Discourse analysis has been influenced by conversation analysis and its appreciation of the architecture of talk-in-interaction and rhetorical analysis, which recognises the argumentative capabilities of talk. Conversation analysis considers talk within social interaction to be sequential, the principal ambition being to reveal and account for this orderliness (Edwards, 1997, Potter, 1996b). Potter and Wetherell (1987) explored how contributions from different speakers in a conversation are meshed together and the way different types of actions, such as requesting, justifying and inviting are embedded in conversational sequences. Conversation analysis is concerned with turn organisation, the pairing of actions, mechanisms of repair, the preference organisation of alternative turns and the marking of responses such as acceptances and refusals, agreements and disagreements (Potter, 1996a).

Rhetorical analysis addresses the management of competing versions of events, often in political and legal disputes and moral conflict, such as the rhetorical nature of the repressed unconscious (Billig, 1999). The approach is concerned with how talk is structured to be persuasive, undermine alternative positions and resist claims of partiality or interest (Edwards and Potter, 1992). Rhetorical analysis also attends to the role of rhetorical devices, such as the emphasis of particular words, effective timing and the use of analogies to convey experience, argued to increase the impact of communication (Adams et al, 1995).
Common themes in discourse analysis research

Discourse analysis research involves the detailed, interpretative analysis of discursive actions, such as how descriptions are selected in preference to potential alternatives to perform actions, how speakers formulate accounts as authentic, how blame and accountability are managed, how speakers attend to category entitlements, how interpretative repertoires operate, how speakers employ rhetorical devices and how other speakers orient to what has been said (Auburn and Lea, 2001, Potter, 1996a). There is a fundamental premise in discourse analysis research that descriptions are bound up with the performance of actions (Potter, 1996b). Individuals invoke a variety of descriptions when talking and, rather than merely reflecting or being determined by events, these descriptions constitute reality (Billig, 1997). Descriptions can be 'worked up', strengthened or weakened by various procedures of representation (Wooffitt, 1992) and are 'occasioned'. Produced on the occasion for the occasion, descriptions perform particular activities on their particular occasions of use (Pomerantz, 1986, Potter, 1996b).

Resources for constructing facticity

Given that descriptions of reality are occasioned and perform specific discursive actions, there is an infinite range of potential formulations of events (Edwards and Middleton, 1986). Therefore, the notion of the 'whole truth' is literally unattainable (Wooffitt, 1992). Rather than attempt to determine what really happened (Pollner, 1987), it is more valid to explore how a 'true' event is formulated. A prevalent theme in discourse analysis research is fact construction (Potter, 1996b), how descriptions are produced so that they will be treated as factual. Discursive psychologists have identified a number of discursive techniques through which descriptions are made to seem solid and independent of the speaker's concerns and motives (Edwards, 1997). Potter (1996b) generated a 'reality production kit' comprising nine discursive techniques for constructing facticity: category entitlement, vivid description, narrative, systematic vagueness, empiricist accounting, consensus and corroboration, rhetoric of argument, lists and contrasts and extreme case formulations (Hepburn, 2003).
The theme of category entitlement is a pervasive feature of everyday reasoning about facts and descriptions. Potter (1996b) claimed that the veracity of a report is warranted by the entitlements of the category membership of the speaker. Individuals who are members of a particular group, for example, scientists, doctors, police-officers, are entitled to know certain things, to possess particular knowledge and their descriptions of events may be given special credence (Edwards and Potter, 1992, Potter, 1996b). Descriptions are also rhetorically organised to make attributional inferences available (Edwards, 1997). Speakers use categories, which attend rhetorically to possible alternative descriptions and can be employed as the basis for inferences about those to whom the category applies (Wooffitt, 1992). Edwards and Potter (1992) examined newspapers and parliamentary records documenting Nigel Lawson’s intentions to reduce state benefits for the elderly. Lawson refuted that he had made such contentious claims by describing the journalistic source as a ‘hack’. The term ‘hack’ attends to category-bound traits of inaccuracy and amateurism and portrays the reporter as dishonourable, ‘concocting’ the story for notoriety and monetary gain.

Potter (1996b) argues that descriptions rich in contextual detail create an impression of perceptual re-experience. Such details can be worked up rhetorically to increase facticity, for example, direct reported speech or ‘active voicing’ permits the speaker to recreate the event ‘verbatim’ as if they had been present. The speakers are ‘designing certain utterances to be heard as if they were said at the time’ (Wooffitt, 1992, p.161) enhancing the factuality of a claim by formulating a sense of corroboration. The facticity of a report can also be increased by embedding it in a narrative in which the resulting event or action is expected. A narrative sequence can set up a context of ‘deniability’, a framework which facilitates the refuting of potential allegations, by discursively fusing attribution, event descriptions and causal explanations (Edwards and Middleton, 1986). However, while detail and narrative provide leverage for initiating a rebuttal, vague, global formulations can also act as barriers to potential undermining.

Empiricist accounting, characteristic of scientific talk and text (Gilbert and Mulkay, 1984), is an externalising device for the construction of factuality. The utterance ‘it was believed that’, employs passive discourse and eliminates the observer, forcing facts onto human actors who play a secondary role in the account (Edwards and Potter, 1992). Empiricist accounting also attends to consensus and corroboration by allowing the
inference that the ‘belief’ is widespread across independent observers without being explicitly committed to the existence of more than one believer. Idiomatic arguments, such as ‘banging yer head against a brick wall’ (Drew and Holt, 1989, p.508) and Margaret Thatcher’s ‘we hammered out a policy’ (Edwards and Potter, 1992, p.144), are rhetorical resources for constructing facticity suited to environments where the speaker’s version of events may be challenged. These proverbial expressions possess a robustness that makes them hard to undermine with facts and they often succeed in terminating a topic of discussion. In political oratory, three-part lists (Jefferson, 1990, cited in Edwards and Potter, 1992) and the use of contrasting descriptions also serve to construct accounts as complete and representative.

Potter’s final method of reality production is the use of ‘extreme-case’ formulations. These are common descriptive practices which strengthen accounts by drawing on extremes of relevant dimensions of judgement, often with the use of utterances such as ‘extremely’, ‘only’, ‘never’ and ‘everyone’ (Pomerantz, 1986). Extreme case formulations maximise the object, quality or state of affairs to which they refer and are rhetorically designed to counter alternatives. When a claim is being bolstered against doubt or disagreement, extremes guard against the likelihood of a recipient being able to undermine the basis of the speaker’s claims (Edwards, 1997). Finally, it is vital that these resources for fact construction are not considered in isolation. For example, the devices of consensus and corroboration can be used in conjunction with extreme-case formulations and empiricist accounting.

*The reporting of unusual experiences*

Discursive interactions in which co-participants may be sceptical of or unsympathetic to what the speaker is saying necessitate the maximisation of facticity. These interactions include political debates, where speakers must convince others of their credibility, and police interrogations, in which suspects need to justify their actions and negotiate blame. Wooffitt (1991, 1992) claimed that factual accounting is also required when events provide an implicit challenge to the common-sense understanding of the world, in this case, the reporting of paranormal experiences.

1 so I I think I remember I ’ad a dish
We were in the kitchen. There were doors there and a door there. It was a kitchen, and I was right by this unit part. I was lookin' out that way. An' it seemed to be like a figure coming through the hall. All I could see was the ah... the top part.

(Extract from Wooffitt, 1991, p.270)

Wooffitt (1992) observed a series of resources for constructing facticity in accounts of paranormal phenomena. Wooffitt noted that speakers employ externalising devices to generate a sense of 'out-there-ness'. Implicit references to paranormal events as 'it', as in 'it seemed to be like a figure (. ) coming through the hall' (lines 17-19), portray the phenomena as existing in the world, rather than as 'a product of fantasy or imagination' (p.103). The use of 'it' to describe the supernatural event in the extract, as opposed to the use of technical terms such as 'apparition' or 'ghost', also minimises the speaker's apparent interest or belief in paranormal phenomena. Wooffitt argued that, by diminishing fascination with psychic activity, witnesses are discursively attending to notions of category membership, depicting themselves as members of the 'normal' category rather than the category 'crank'.

In addition to speakers formulating themselves as rational storytellers, a further technique for enhancing the facticity of an extraordinary event is to ground the experience in a sequence of events which is routine and ordinary (Wooffitt, 1992). Sacks (1984, cited in Potter, 1996b) observed that speakers base unusual experiences in an ordinary sequence by employing the format 'I was just doing X, when Y', where 'X' represents a mundane activity and 'Y' the occurrence of an exceptional event. In the extract, Wooffitt (1991) noted that the witness initially constructs a narrative of mundane activity, the 'X' in Sacks' discursive device, prior to introducing the
paranormal event. The preceding activity of the speaker is described as an unexceptional household task, ‘I ‘ad a dish in hand I was out in the kitchen’ (lines 1-2). The first encounter with the phenomenon, ‘an’ it seemed to be like a figure’ (line 17), the ‘Y’ component of the discursive device, is therefore grounded in a routine which does not anticipate a paranormal experience. This serves to normalise the speaker and increase the feasibility of the account.

**Normalisation and formulating scripted behaviour**

When individuals describe behaviour, they often construct it as following, or deviating from, what is expectable and proper. Discourse analysis research has considered the descriptive devices used to construct actions and dispositions as normal or abnormal. Potter (1996b) argued that it is not sufficient to describe an action which will be consensually recognised as normal. Rather, the concept of normality must be constructed in discourse. Edwards (1997) examined the narratives of ‘Jimmy’ and ‘Connie’, a couple recounting their relationship difficulties during a marriage guidance session, in particular, Connie’s portrayal of Jimmy’s jealousy:

1 At that point, (0.6) Jimmy ha- (. ) my- Jimmy
2 is extremely jealous. Ex-extremely jealous
3 per:son. Has a:lways \(\text{been} \), from the da:y we met.
4 Y’know? An’ at that point in time, there was an
5 episo:de, with (. ) a bloke, (. ) in a pub, y’know?
6 And me: having a few drinks and messin’. (0.8)
7 That was it. (0.4) Right? And this (0.4) got all
8 out of hand to Jimmy according to Jimmy I was
9 a:always doin’ it and .hhh y’know a:always
10 aggravating him. He was a jealous person I:
11 Aggravated the situation. .h And he walked out
12 that ti:me. To me it was (. ) totally ridiculous
13 the way he (0.8) goes o:n (0.4) through this
14 problem that he ha:s.

(Extract from Edwards, 1997, p.156)

Firstly, rather than describing Jimmy as succumbing to a moment of jealousy, Connie portrays her husband as a characteristically jealous individual using extreme-case formulations, ‘my- Jimmy is extremely jealous. Ex-extremely jealous per:son. Has a:always \(\text{been} \)’ (lines 1-3, emphasis added). The utterance formulates Jimmy as
possessing a deep-rooted and enduring disposition that accounts for his recurrent behaviour during the marriage. Secondly, Jimmy’s jealous nature is descriptively grounded in the scripted nature of his actions. Connie describes this particular incident in the pub as indicative of a pattern, ‘there was an episode’ (lines 4-5). Jimmy’s actions on this occasion are used as the basis of a more generalised, scripted account of ‘the kind of thing that Jimmy can be routinely expected to do’ (Edwards, 1997, p.156). In the utterance ‘the way he (0.8) goes on (0.4) through this problem he has’ (lines 13-14), Connie cites Jimmy’s jealousy as an explanation for his patterned conduct. Thirdly, Jimmy’s jealousy is grounded by the specific details of Connie’s episodic example. Connie constructs the location of the incident, ‘a bloke, (. ) in a pub...having a few drinks and messin’ (lines 4-7) by attending to innocuous expectations of ‘a bloke’ (anonymous, impersonal), ‘a pub’ (non-intimate, sociable environment), ‘a few drinks’ (non-excessive alcohol consumption) and ‘messin’ (innocent, pub-typical play), Connie constructs Jimmy’s reaction as unwarranted and responsible for the marital difficulties.

The dilemma of stake

The rhetorical nature of stake and interest is also a pervasive feature in research concerning the production of facticity. The ‘dilemma’ is that anything that an individual says or does may be discounted as a product of stake (Edwards and Potter, 1992). To enhance the facticity of a description, it is necessary for the speaker to eliminate any apparent stake they may have in convincing others of its authenticity. The description must be independent of the agent doing the production (Wooffitt, 1992). In the previous extract, Connie constructs an account of husband Jimmy’s unjustified jealousy in response to her innocuous activities ‘with (. ) a bloke, (. ) in a pub...having a few drinks and messin’ (lines 4-6). Jimmy attempts to counter this formulation in the utterance ‘Connie had a short skirt on I don’t know’ (p.158). This draws attention to Connie’s revealing attire whilst minimising Jimmy’s stake in the description. The expression ‘I don’t know’ portrays Jimmy as disinterested in his flirtatious wife’s clothing, at a point where his reaction could become an issue, contradicting any notion of suspicious jealousy (Edwards, 1997).
In addition to exhibiting impartiality when trying to convince others of the facticity of a description, authenticity can also be weakened by emphasising ‘the personal or institutional stake of the account’s author’ (Potter, 1996b, p.122). In 1963, witness Mandy Rice-Davies was questioned during the investigation of British Defence Minister John Profumo following accusations of prostitution and espionage. The management of stake is evident in an extract taken from the cross-examination, dramatised in the 1989 film ‘Scandal’:

Counsel: Are you aware that Lord Astor denies any impropriety in his relationship with you (.8)
Rice-Davies: Well he would wouldn’t he
Jury: [Prolonged laughter]

(Extract from Edwards and Potter, 1992, p.117)

The rebuttal, ‘well he would wouldn’t he’, effectively reformulates the utterance as a product of the motivations of the defence, which consequently undermines the testimony of the accused. The utterance also invokes an interactional context by seeking agreement in the tag question ‘wouldn’t he’, a discursive device which demonstrates confidence and appeals to the common knowledge of the audience.

The management of accountability

Individuals are held accountable for actions that violate social and moral expectations. Situations where there has been ‘a failure or breakdown of normal conduct’ require the formulation of an account (Austin, 1961, p.75). The resulting account represents ‘a statement made by a social actor to explain unanticipated or untoward behaviour’ (Scott and Lyman, 1968, p.46). The discursive role of accountability is a central feature of discourse analysis research, particularly methods of formulating explanations for blameworthy behaviour. Buttny (1993) argued that talk has a ‘transformative function’, reframing the responsibility of the actor and the impact of the transgression in order to transform the negative evaluations of others.

Following accusations of excessive police violence during the 1981 Springbok rugby tour of New Zealand, Wetherell and Potter (1989) interviewed 18 witnesses to the
violence to establish which discursive constructions of the police facilitated the mitigation of their culpable behaviour. Wetherell and Potter observed six types of rebuttal drawn on to justify the police violence, (1) causal context, (2) rational motivation, (3) rational motivation 'universaliser', (4) causal context and violent self, (5) 'doing the job' and (6) an amalgamation of causal context, violent self and 'doing the job'.

The 'causal context' justifications draw attention to factors perceived to interfere with the intentions of the police, for example 'they would have been antagonised by the protesters' (p.209, emphasis added). This type of account attributes the behaviour of the police to an external source, detracting from and downgrading the significance of the violence. The 'rational motivation' rebuttal provides acceptable reasons for the hostile behaviour of the police. In these accounts, police violence is constructed as a prerequisite and a response to the actions of others, 'it was necessary for the police to meet force with force' (p.210, emphasis added). The violence is also nominalised, with the use of expressions such as 'picketing' as opposed to 'strikers picket factory' (p.211), ensuring that the cause of the violence cannot be ascertained.

Rather than minimising the aggressive nature of the violence, 'rational motivation universaliser' accounts emphasise the police brutality as an achievement and a consequence of positive motivation. The decisions made by the police, 'which I wouldn't have liked to have taken' (p.212), are portrayed as rational and comparable to those made by any individual in the same situation. The most common method of justifying accountable police behaviour was the use of 'causal context and violent self', descriptions of natural and excusable psychological reactions under extreme stress. The actions of the police are removed from the moral evaluative sphere applied to human behaviour:

I think the police acted very well. They're only human. If they lashed out and cracked a skull occasionally, it was, hah, only a very human action I'm sure.

(Extract taken from Wetherell and Potter, 1989, p.213)
In accounts employing ‘causal context and violent self’, acts of violence were downgraded by the use of a minimising descriptive style, for example, ‘cracked a skull occasionally, it was, hah, only a very human action’. The problematic behaviour of the police is placed in a sociological and political context in ‘doing the job’ justifications. By incorporating role discourse, the accounts formulate the actions of the police as constrained by the nature and requirements of the occupation, regardless of genuine motive. Descriptions of role behaviour also minimise police responsibility and legitimise the violence as a consequence of following orders:

They didn’t have much choice...they were the blooming scapegoats who had to get out and police the thing...they’ve got to do their job...a lot of people tend to forget that.

(Extract taken from Wetherell and Potter, 1989, p. 215)

The final form of account combines three previous mitigating components, ‘causal context, violent self and doing the job’. The witnesses provide a causal context for the elicitation of police actions, describe the violence in a downgraded form and justify the violence as characteristic of the role of the police:

...the protesters, they were getting violent and they were virtually attacking the police. I mean you’re standing there, it’s your job, you’ve been told to go out and keep the protest peaceful...and somebody starts throwing rocks at you...I wouldn’t stand there and take it...I would have hit back.

(Extract taken from Wetherell and Potter, 1989, p.216)

Discourse analysis research into the management of accountability is particularly relevant to the study of justifications for criminal behaviour in the context of the police investigative interview. Therefore, this field of research will be considered in greater depth in the second half of the chapter.
Discourse analysis research has also addressed the role of interpretative repertoires, discursive resources that speakers draw on to perform actions, construct factual descriptions of events and manage accountability (Edwards and Potter, 1992). Interpretative repertoires are systematically related sets of terms, often organised around a central metaphor, with a bespoke flexibility that can be selectively drawn on according to the context (Potter, 1996a). On examining textual documents, technical reports and interview statements, Gilbert and Mulkay (1984) differentiated two interpretative repertoires evident in the talk and text of biochemists. The informal 'contingent' repertoire, the 'narrative mode of scientific talk' (Edwards, 1997, p.286), was characterised by personal motives, speculative insights and justifications for error. In contrast, the 'empiricist' repertoire, commonly associated with the language of research papers, was impersonal, method-based and managed justifications of factuality through the use of the passive 'it was concluded that...' as opposed to 'I conclude that...'. The empiricist repertoire enabled the data to do the confirming, independent of the actions of the scientists (Edwards and Potter, 1992).

Whilst investigating discursive formulations of marriage, Lawes (1999) identified two distinct discourses, the 'romantic' repertoire, depicting an idealised, mythical notion of marriage 'in theory', and the 'realist' repertoire, the awareness of how marriage actually is 'in practice'. The 'romantic' repertoire was characterised by accounts of love, permanence, commitment and exclusivity. The concept of meeting the ideal partner was cited as a prerequisite for a successful marriage, 'obviously, if you're going to get married then you're with the right person' (p.7). Participants who employed the 'romantic' repertoire opposed the concept of cohabitation and also emphasised the importance of continually striving to make a marriage work. In contrast, those who utilised the 'realist' repertoire favoured descriptions of fatalism, debt, infidelity and divorce. Participants minimised the differences between cohabitation and marriage and demonstrated awareness of the potential setbacks, 'getting married is probably one of the biggest risks you ever take' (p.12). Lawes discussed the implications of these two interpretative repertories for the growth of contemporary alternatives to traditional partnerships. In both interpretative repertoire
studies, it is apparent that what is at stake are not ‘facts’ but two different ways of talking about the events in question (Potter, 1996a).

I ideological dilemmas

Individuals possess contrary linguistic repertoires for talking about their lives (Potter and Wetherell, 1987). These repertoires do not employ neutral labels; rather they are social, ideological representations which convey moral evaluations. These ideologies are often in opposition, such as those that promote ‘collective-interest’ and those that promote ‘self-interest’ (Billig et al, 1988). Despite being in conflict, these alternative ideologies are valued and desirable in particular contexts and this creates the dilemma. For example, there exists two antithetical educational ideologies, the ‘traditional’ ideology of curriculum and the learning of set outcomes and the ‘progressive’ ideology in which pupils achieve an understanding of the world through their own potential and skill.

Edwards and Mercer (1987) explored the dilemmatic relation between ‘traditional’ and ‘progressive’ learning ideologies by analysing video recordings of eight- and nine-year-old children in science classes. Edwards and Mercer observed that teachers attended to the dilemma by formulating classroom events according to their originally planned outcomes (Edwards and Potter, 1992). They identified interactional devices employed by teachers to lead pupils to the outcome while presenting the arrival of those outcomes as the achievement of the pupils themselves. These interactional devices, known collectively as ‘cued elicitation’, included gestural cues whilst asking questions to indicate the correct answer, silence to indicate the inadequacy of pupils contributions, encouraging welcome suggestions, introducing ‘new’ knowledge as already known and paraphrasing pupils responses to bring them closer to the intended meaning (Billig et al, 1998). It was concluded that, despite the conflicting nature of the ‘traditional’ and ‘progressive’ ideologies, the management of the dilemma through the implementation of cued elicitation is fundamental to sustaining the practice of teaching (Hepburn, 2003).
Research on discursive formulations of criminal behaviour

Constructing the offence in the courtroom

Discourse analytic research has considered how courtroom discourse accomplishes social actions, specifically, how the prosecution and the defence negotiate culpability and innocence and manage competing versions of events. Courtroom talk utilises the same range of discursive devices found in everyday conversation, attending to fact construction, accountability and the role of interpretative repertoires. However, the structural properties of courtroom discourse violate the conventions of everyday conversation (Atkinson and Drew, 1979). Cross-examination is conducted within the constraints of a specialised turn-taking system in which the turn-order is fixed and organised into a series of ‘question’ and ‘answer’ pairs. The turns are also pre-specified, with questions from the counsel and answers from the witness, rather than being randomly distributed between participants. This conversational asymmetry enables the counsel to determine the agenda for the occasion and denies the witness the right to provide an account in their own words (Drew and Heritage, 1992). Atkinson and Drew (1979) argued that the preconstituted question-answer sequence characteristic of courtroom talk is effective for doing certain types of discursive activity, for example, controlling topics to be discussed, eliciting information, checking understanding, comparing versions of events, assessing the consistency of a particular version and gauging accuracy.

The offence as constructed by the prosecution

A number of studies have sought to identify discursive devices utilised by the prosecution to formulate accounts of criminal activity. Coates et al (1994) explored how magistrates described sexual assaults in a sample of 12 Canadian trial judgements. Coates et al identified two opposing interpretative repertoires used to describe the offences, a ‘stranger rape’ repertoire and a ‘consensual sexual activity’ repertoire. The ‘stranger rape’ repertoire depicted violent acts imposed by a stranger on a woman who recognises her danger and resists with utmost physical struggle. However, Coates et al also observed a prevailing repertoire of ‘consensual sexual activity',
which portrayed the alleged sexual assaults as erotic, affectionate and fraught with misunderstandings.

The ‘consensual sexual activity’ repertoire depicted the defendants as mutually ‘engaging in sexual intercourse’ and ‘acts of a sexual nature’. The prosecutors formulated the sexual assaults as playful, affectionate ‘bouts of intercourse’, involving ‘fondling’ and ‘touching’. The repertoire also minimised the violent and forceful actions of the alleged perpetrator by adopting passive discourse, ‘advantage was taken of the situation’, ‘he caused them to commit acts of a sexual nature’ and the victim was ‘required to perform acts of masturbation’. In one particular trial judgment, a male perpetrator inserted his genitals into the mouth of his alleged victim as she lay sleeping, an act which was described by the magistrate as ‘offering his penis’ (p.189). The term ‘offering’ denotes an element of choice for the recipient as to whether she accepts or refuses the proposal.

In addition to portraying sexual assault as affectionate and mutual, the magistrates who employed the ‘consensual sexual activity’ repertoire removed the notion of agency. The utterances, ‘there was an abuse of trust’, ‘the struggle got into the bedroom’, ‘they were both forced acts of buggery’ and the complainant ‘sustained some bruises’, are passive and there is no mention of a perpetrator. As Edwards and Potter (1992) previously stated, an interpretative repertoire is a discursive resource that speakers draw on to perform actions, construct factual descriptions of events and manage accountability. When the ‘consensual sexual activity’ repertoire is employed, the opposing ‘sexual assault’ repertoire is explicitly dismissed. Coates et al claim that this discourse of affection, minimisation and mutuality threatens to render the sexual assault of women indistinguishable from consensual sex.

The offence as constructed by the defendant
Discourse analytic research has also examined formulations of criminal acts by defendants. Komter (1994) observed that guilty defendants in Dutch courtroom interactions often mitigated their accountability by offering ‘partial admissions’. Rather than completely refuting the proposed versions of events, the defendants offered qualified versions which softened the injurious elements of the allegations. Komter noted that these partial admissions addressed the ideological dilemma of
being discursively cooperative and defensive within the courtroom. The partial admissions incorporated alternative descriptions, enabling the defendants to dissociate themselves from the damaging implications of the charges by providing a competing version of reality:

Defendant: Simply took his arm like this and not as they say threw him out. But he just simply stepped off the doorstep uh himself.

(Extract taken from Komter, 1994, p.174)

The first defendant avoids explicitly denying the physical abuse of the child by minimising the incident, ‘simply took his arm...just simply stepped off the doorstep’. The speaker mitigates his actions further by establishing a distinction between his behaviour and the suggestion that he ‘threw him out’. The partial admissions also encompass an avoidance of agency, enabling the defendants to underplay their active participation in the offence:

Defendant: Then I suddenly remembered my gun and I reached for it and then there were shots

(Extract taken from Komter, 1994, p.175)

The gunshots responsible for the wounding of the victim are described by the second defendant as just ‘there’. The use of the term ‘suddenly’, a passivity marker, suggests that the alleged offender was unprepared for the pivotal role of the weapon in the incident. The shooting occurred irrespective of the actions of the defendant. Further devices employed by defendants in the courtroom include disclaimers which attend to the nature of memory, for example ‘to the best of my knowledge’ and ‘as I recall’ (Edwards and Potter, 1992). Once again, defendants can manage the dilemma of portraying themselves as cooperative witnesses with concerns for accuracy, whilst attending to the possibility that counter-evidence may undermine their accounts. In addition, the responses ‘I don’t know’ and ‘I don’t remember’ are employed by defendants as a means of avoiding confirming potentially damaging information
(Drew, 1992). The defendant can effectively ‘neutralise’ an account without directly challenging or disputing the version of events.

The offence as a communicative process
Despite previous indications that constructions of guilt, innocence and the criminal act are governed by the rhetoric of either the prosecution or the defendant, discourse analytic research has examined such formulations in relation to the discursive interactions between courtroom participants. Linell et al (1993) analysed 70 transcriptions of Swedish courtroom proceedings for minor economic and traffic offences. It was noted that, whilst the defendant’s denials and admissions of guilt were crucially relevant, all of the courtroom interlocutors were engaged in performing communicative acts. For example, at the onset of each trial, immediately after the prosecutor’s statement of the charge, the judges ask the defendants whether they admit or deny the alleged offence:

Judge: OK, is it correct, this, John Eriksson?
Defendant: yes, I have admitted it, haven’t I, so...
Judge: you admit

(Extract taken from Linell et al, 1993, p.159)

In each extract, the judge contributes to the communicative process by restating the act of admission. This reiteration could be for the benefit of the official record, the public or the jury, who comprise the ‘overhearing audience’ (Drew, 1992). Similar communicative projects are evident in the Anglo-American judicial system (Drew, 1990). However, cross-examinations in American criminal trials represent contests between the prosecution and the defence as to who can produce a more convincing story about whether and how a violation of law occurred. Drew (1990) observed opposing formulations of criminal acts by defence attorneys and alleged rape victims. While the defence attorneys characterised the relationships between the alleged victims and the defendants with the intention of discrediting the prosecution’s version of events, the responses of the alleged victims were designed to manage the damaging implications of these descriptions. For example, the defence attorney describes the bar in which the alleged rape victim first encounters the defendant:
Counsel: It's where uh (. ) uh (0.3) gi:rls and fella:s
meet isn't it?
Witness: People go: there.

(Extract taken from Drew, 1990, p.45)

The defence attorney describes the location as a place where 'gi:rls and fella:s meet', a
description which attends to relationship-style categories and the possible expectations
that club patrons have of each other. The witness attempts to neutralise these
implications by depersonalising the gender-relevant companionship of 'gi:rls and
fella:s', employing the generalised and asexual 'people'. The witness reformulates the
function of the bar to escape the inference that it is a place where males and females
socialise for sexual purposes, they simply 'go: there'.

Counsel: An during that eve:ning: (0.6) uh: didn't mistuh
((name)) come over tuh sit with you
(0.8)
Witness: Sat at our table.

(Extract taken from Drew, 1990, p.45)

Once again, the attorney attempts to discredit the alleged victim’s claims to
blamelessness by describing the defendant as enjoying the close proximity of the
witness for an undisclosed period of time ‘during that eve:ning’. The witness eliminates
the notion of being alone in the company of the suspect by describing him as joining
‘our table’, namely a larger group of individuals. The alleged victim again
depersonalises the description by removing the defendant from the utterance ‘(he) sat at
our table’.

Counsel: Well you kne:w at that ti:me, that the defendant
was. in:terested (. ) in you (. ) did’n you?
(1.3)
Witness: He: asked me how a’bin:

(Extract taken from Drew, 1990, p.47)

The defence attorney describes the alleged victim as conscious of the defendant’s
attraction to her whilst socialising with him in the bar. This is reformulated by the
witness as the minimised ‘He: asked me how a’bin’, a routine conversational utterance
which fails to communicate romantic interest. To summarise, the interpretative properties of the descriptions provided by the attorney and the alleged rape victim convey different versions of the activities in which the witness was engaged. In each case the witness avoids confirming the counsel’s version of events, which are detrimental to her testimony, by providing alternative ‘revised’ versions. The witness is attempting to correct the implications conveyed by the attorney’s portrayal of the facts concerning her own culpability.

**Accounts in the therapeutic discourse of sex offenders**

In addition to examining constructions of criminal acts within the courtroom, discourse analysis research has also explored the justificatory narratives of convicted sex offenders within the context of therapeutic intervention. As previously discussed in Chapter 2, research has addressed the convicted paedophile’s ability to rationalise and minimise sexual contact with children (Abel et al, 1984, Happel and Auffrey, 1995, Pollock and Hashmall, 1991). However, early enquiries were preoccupied with cataloguing types of justification and adhering to predetermined categories. In contrast, discourse analysis has contextualised the rhetoric of the perpetrators, focussing on the offenders’ own formulations of their criminal behaviour, with a view to understanding the account as part of a social practice (Lea and Auburn, 2001). In the discourse analysis of accounts of father-daughter incest and wife battering, Hydén and McCarthy (1994) observed a distinctive justificatory discourse in the explanations of the perpetrators:

...we have fights sure. When she starts harping about something and doesn’t stop, one really gets down. Then we have an argument...first comes the screaming, back and forth...but don’t call this assault. There was no hitting with fists or in the face...It was more like this (acts out slaps and shoves). It was just a reaction...you start shoving...react like a human being.

(Extract taken from Hydén and McCarthy, 1994, p.553)

Hydén and McCarthy noted that the accounts of both sexually and physically abusive individuals incorporated minimising descriptions whilst emphasising the mutual accountability of the perpetrator and the victim. For example, the physically violent
offender in the previous extract attempts to minimise the severity of assaulting his wife by stating 'there was no hitting with fists or in the face'. Whilst the perpetrator differentiates his own actions from the more brutal facial wounding and the use of fists, he avoids disclosing what he actually did by evoking an ambiguous range of potential violent behaviours. In addition, by claiming that his behaviour was 'just a reaction' and that he responded 'like a human being', the offender portrays his actions as both unpremeditated and to be expected from an ordinary individual. The narrator also stresses the reciprocity of the disagreement by describing the physical assault as 'fights', an 'argument' and as going 'back and forth'. It was concluded that the offenders' accounts of sexual and physical abuse incorporated a 'rhetoric of exculpation', the neutralisation of morally unacceptable acts with implications for accepting sexual and physical abuse within the family.

In a more recent and comprehensive analysis of the account of a convicted sex offender, Lea and Auburn (2001) examined a prison-based treatment session with 'Nathan', an individual convicted of raping a young woman with an accomplice. Lea and Auburn identified three themes in the narrative which served to mitigate the offender's accountability for his crimes, 'ambiguity of victim's role and motive', 'storyteller as passive and empathic' and 'co-perpetrator as brutal rapist'.

In terms of the 'ambiguity of victim's role and motive', Lea and Auburn noted that 'Nathan' describes the victim as alone, on a dark night, in an isolated area. Rather than avoiding the two men and their nearby van, the victim was depicted as approaching them in order to walk past 'a sort of alleyway' (line 19). This description generates a range of inferences concerning the accountability of the victim. Whist drawing on social behaviours considered risky and inappropriate for young women, 'Nathan' is portraying the victim as placing herself in a vulnerable position with regard to her proximity to her attackers. The offender also describes a conversation between himself and the victim...
reminiscent of adults engaging in consensual sex, 'she said what do you want now?' (line 89, p.28). The offender constructs the victim as consenting to and inviting sexual activity. This calls into question whether the incident constituted rape or an opportunistic sexual encounter.

21 and I walked up behind her
22 um and just picked her up and grabbed her
23 just (.) cuddled, kissed, cuddled

(Extract taken from Lea and Auburn, 2001, p.26)

The theme of 'storyteller as passive and empathic' is demonstrated in the preceding extract. The narrator portrays the victim as an active participant, using vocabulary consistent with a romantic relationship between consenting adults, 'just cuddled, kissed, cuddled' (line 23). The innocuous utterance counters potential formulations of his behaviour which construct him as intending to rape. The modifier 'just' also limits the inferences available from the offender's account (Drew, 1992). Rather than appearing threatening, 'Nathan' is portrayed as sympathetic and considerate, 'I took my jacket off and I laid it down for her (.) to He on' (lines 94-95, p.28). There is also no mention of the victim's resistance to his advances.

74 and Michael walked up and got her top, her blouse
75 and just pulled her blouse down to express
76 expose her breasts. (1)
77 and then he started feeling them up and masturbating
78 and I started doing the same (.).

(Extract taken from Lea and Auburn, 2001, p.27)

The role of 'co-perpetrator as brutal rapist' is evident in the previous extract. The offender minimises his responsibility further by describing 'Michael', accomplice to the rape, as the key protagonist who initiates the sexual aggression, 'got her top...pulled her blouse down...expose her breasts...he started feeling them up and masturbating' (lines 74-77). The narrator even divulges an attempt to rescue the victim from his forceful companion in the utterance 'What the f__ are you doing? What the f__ are you doing?' I said 'No, don't do that' (p.7-8, p.29). The rhetorical use of contrasting description, in this case, of 'Nathan' seeking a mutually satisfying, affectionate experience and of
‘Michael’ as a hostile, stereotypical rapist, further differentiates the offender from his associate. Further discourse analysis by Auburn and Lea (2001) noted similar rhetorical devices for managing blame and responsibility in the narrative of an individual convicted of the rape of his daughter:

6 Uu::hh, well we’d gone out out and we went down to a
7 club which was about 20 mile away,
8 uu::m (1) um by the- by the time my wife, my son, and
9 Sally had drunk a lot
10 I didn’t drink as much ‘cos I was driving, I had a 20
11 mile drive back home (2) [sigh]
12 so when we got home then we had a a cup of coffee and
13 I put on a, some records while we were drinking

(Extract taken from Auburn and Lea, 2001, p.288)

The offender provides a ‘quotidian precursor’ to the offence, a claim to ordinariness with no connection to the rape, ‘we got home then we had a a cup of coffee and I put on a, some records’ (lines 12-13). The grounding of an unusual experience in a sequence of events which is routine and unexceptional normalises the narrator, depicts the offence as unanticipated and enhances the facticity of the account (Wooffitt, 1992). The extract also attends to formulations of scripted behaviour in the utterance ‘we went down to a club...my wife, my son, and Sally had drunk a lot I didn’t drink as much ‘cos I was driving’ (lines 6-10). By employing the category ‘club’, the offender implicitly invokes behaviours associated with frequenting a nightclub, for example, socialising, dancing and drinking, activities reserved exclusively for adults. These inferences are emphasised as the offender attributes a noteworthy degree of alcohol consumption to the remaining members of his family, which once again invokes a range of behaviours such as acting uncontrollably and irresponsibly. Alternatively, the offender describes himself as not having consumed any alcohol. Not only does this detail ensure that he is perceived as a careful driver, but it also provides him with an element of plausible deniability. The utterance eliminates the possibility that the sexual act between the perpetrator and his daughter will be attributed to his drunken motives.

13 I put on a, some records while we were drinking.
14 (It was a mixture of an) LP and on it was a, (. ) a
15 tune called ‘The Stripper’ (1)
One of the things my wife and I used to do, we often used to play that, and she would strip off (to that) (4). hh well this time even though the children were with us she started to strip off again (2).

(Extract taken from Auburn and Lea, 2001, p.291)

The narrator marks a moment in the action as producing an unexpected 'shift in the definition of the situation', 'I put on a, some records...it was a, (.) a tune called 'The Stripper' (lines 13-15). An unremarkable incident is transformed into an episode with sexual qualities as the narrator invokes a script formulation of intimate activity between himself and his wife, 'we often used to play that, and she would (1.5) strip off'. However, it is the offender's wife who is described as violating the scripted moment, 'even though the children were with us she started to strip off again' (lines 19-20). Despite the normative properties evoked by the category 'children', such as innocence, and the need for protection and nurturing, the wife is portrayed as instigating the shift in the situation and introducing a sexual element to the family gathering.

It was concluded that the narratives of incarcerated sex offenders exhibit a series of rhetorical features (Auburn and Lea, 2001, Lea and Auburn, 2001). All of the descriptions mitigate the responsibility of the perpetrator for his involvement in the offence. The descriptions are oriented to providing a plausible account of how the unexpected sexual act arose out of seemingly ordinary activities. A narrative character other than that of the perpetrator is portrayed as actively instigating a shift in the definition of the situation. It is this radical shift in the nature of the incident, described as unanticipated by the narrator, which leads to the offence.

**Formulating 'what actually happened' in the police-suspect interview**

Not unlike courtroom talk, police interviews utilise the same range of discursive devices found in everyday conversation under the constraints of a pre-specified and asymmetrical turn-taking system (Atkinson and Drew, 1979). Once again, admissions and denials of responsibility for the criminal act are negotiated between the suspect and the 'professional interviewer' (Linell et al, 1993) and the interaction represents a
contest between the police officer and the suspect as to who can produce a more convincing story about whether and how a violation of law occurred (Drew, 1990).

Linell and Jönsson (1991) considered the negotiation of a definitive version of events in the police interview to be characterised by the management of two different perspectives. The suspect employs an ‘everyday life’ perspective to construct an account which admits or denies involvement in a criminal action. The police officer then translates this into the type of report valid in the institutional context, imposing a legal, ‘professional’ perspective to sift out what is judicially relevant. The ‘stage is set for a potential clash between attempts to organise the substance of the story in different ways’ (Linell et al., 1993, p.76). Linell and Jönsson claimed that the ideal police interview would permit the suspect to tell his or her own story with no intervention from the police officer. However, the analysis of 30 Swedish police interrogations of individuals arrested for minor economic offences revealed that this often failed to materialise. It was evident that the professional perspective frequently dominated the interaction as the police officers asked closed questions from the onset, narrowly defined the conditions for answering and provided formulations of the suspects’ responses.

Using the same interview data, Jönsson and Linell (1991) monitored the progression of the suspects’ testimonies from preliminary interrogation to final statement. It was evident that the information in the statements originated from various sources; 36% of the reports encompassed the monological, free-narratives of the suspects during the police interview, 18% of the information represented responses to open but specific police questioning, 29% of the reports were suspects’ responses to closed, leading questions and 17% of the information had no basis in the interrogation and originated from legal documents available to the police. Jönsson and Linell concluded by stating that, ‘the police officer has played a major role in telling the suspect’s story’ (p.424). Despite the substantial implications of these findings for miscarriages of justice, there have been exceptionally few investigations into the discursive interaction between police officers and suspects in the police interview.

Watson (1990) examined the interactional structure of talk in US police interrogations and implications for the elicitation of confessions in murder suspects. Watson observed
that police officers asserted their influence on the suspects' emerging account by employing a range of discursive devices. In one particular interview, the police officer upgrades the accusation with the use of knowledge claims:

...with the red leather jacket...we know you borrowed from a friend...we also know about the gun in the Morris homicide...

(Extract taken from Watson, 1990, p.265-266)

The officer prefaces the allegations with 'we know...' to bolster facticity. Subsequently, the suspect confesses whilst ascribing knowledge to the interviewer, 'seems everybody knows...I just did it, that's all' (p.266). By attending to knowledge claims, the police officer ensures that a simple denial from the suspect is insufficient to override a statement promoted to 'known' as opposed to merely 'suspected'. Further in the interrogation, accusations incorporating 'belief', for example 'we believe...' and 'we think...' serve to downgrade claims, after which 'a bland or simple denial such as 'no I didn't'...might well be enough to terminate the sequence' (p.267). Watson also found that police officers managed the interaction by assuming control of the instigation of the suspect's story:

P: ...would you tell me in your own words what you know of this homicide?
S: Do you want me to start from the beginning?
P: Yes....would you please -
S: [begins story/confession]

(Extracts taken from Watson, 1990, p.274)

Despite the initial invitation to construct a narrative 'in your own words', the materials to be addressed in the forthcoming account are suggested by the prospective recipient, 'tell me...what you know of this homicide'. The police officer assumes control over the content, hence the suspect's response 'Do you want me to start from the beginning?'. The interviewer can then determine when 'enough story' has been recounted by employing 'tokens which help keep the story open or close it down' (p.282). A further resource for the accomplishment of authority by the police officer is to formulate the 'gist' of the suspect's preceding narrative. By commencing a subsequent turn with the
expressions, ‘so...’ ‘well...’ and ‘what you’re saying is...’ the suspect is made to confirm the police officer’s formulation of the suspect’s version of events. Auburn et al (1995) examined accusations of violence in eleven tape-recorded UK police interviews with individuals suspected of assault. Auburn et al observed that the police interviewers sought to officially record a ‘preferred version’ of the criminal event which discursively formulated the suspect as responsible for the criminal act. To communicate the preferred version, police accusations adopted a basic grammatical form:

PO:  um and he alleges that for no apparent reason um you punched him on the left cheek

(Extract taken from Auburn et al, 1995, p.364)

In the previous extract, the police officer actively positions the suspect as the perpetrator of a violent action intentionally directed at another individual which produced harm, ‘you punched him on the left cheek’. Following the initial accusation, the police officers then employed discursive devices to negotiate the suspects’ accountability and obtain agreement with the preferred version. These discursive devices served to downgrade the force of the accusations whilst upgrading the notion of disorderly violence through distinctive event construction. To downgrade the intensity of the accusations the police officers utilised ‘footing’ to avoid positioning themselves as supporting the preferred version of events. For example, the utterance ‘he alleges that for no apparent reason um you punched him on the left cheek’, enables the police officer to present the suspect as responsible for the criminal act whilst depicting himself as merely conveying the claims of the alleged victim. An additional device for upgrading violence and attributing responsibility to a suspect is to construct the offence as distinctly aggressive:

PO:  She’s got knife wounds to both hands consistent with what she’s describing one of which required seven stitches where she says you pulled the knife away from her when she was holding the blade and you can imagine the knife cutting down along there, which is where she’s got the wound
Do you really expect us to believe that you can’t recall an incident like this.

I:  I’m telling-
PO:  It’s not an everyday incident is it?
This ‘discourse of disorderly violence’ positions the individual as the perpetrator of an offence constructed as particularly vicious, uncontrolled and irrational, ‘knife wounds to both hands...seven stitches...pulled the knife away from her when she was holding the blade...you can imagine the knife cutting...she’s got the wound’. The police officer also depicts the violence as disorderly in the sense of breaching normal codes of behaviour by drawing attention to the noticeability of the assault, ‘It’s not an everyday incident is it?’. In response to the allegations, the suspects employed their own rhetorical devices to reformulate the incidents and downgrade the notion of agency.

PO: well yeah but I mean you just been violent in’t ya
I: how’ve I just been violent
PO: well how many store detectives does it take to err
I: I got
a whack on the eye didn’t I

The sequence of events is constructed so that the suspected shoplifter is repositioned as the victim of the actions of the store detectives. The utterance, ‘I got a whack on the eye didn’t I’, places an alternative accusation on the record. Auburn et al also noted that the suspects employed a ‘discourse of justified violence’ to counter the disorderly violence constructed by the police interviewers. The discourse of justified violence recasts the criminal act as rational, acceptable and emanating from the needs of the role occupied by the suspect:

PO: but but what about slapping him
have you slapped him
I: no
PO: on the bum on his legs
I: no no he ain’t had no reason to
he ain’t been naughty

The interviewee, suspected of physically abusing a child, invokes expectations of appropriate parenting as a mean of justifying the ‘slapping’. The suspect refers to infant
disobedience requiring the physical intervention of an adult, 'he ain't had no reason to
he ain't been naughty', which downgrades the act of violence in question from assault to
legitimate discipline. Once again, the attributional salience of the perpetrator is
downgraded, enabling the interviewee to mitigate agency and responsibility. Further
research by Auburn et al (1999) confirmed that police interviewers employ a range of
discursive resources to situationally manufacture a preferred version of events. The
study explored the discursive organisation of expressing disbelief within the police
interview. In one particular case, a police officer indicates doubt following an account of
a woman accused of assaulting and seriously injuring her partner:

1 PO1: [susname] you are (.)
2 I believe first that you’re not actually being
3 honest with your self and with us
4 in fact I don’t believe that you’re actually
5 telling the truth
6 I: I am telling you the truth
7 PO1: Now [namea] has been stabbed twice
8 and he’s been bitten on the nose
9 I: Yeah
10 PO1: He’s in hospital now
11 I: mmmh
12 PO1: I believe that you are the person who have
13 actually inflicted those stab wounds to [namea]
14 now think carefully (.) and answer the question
15 honestly
16 I: No I didn’t do it

(Extract taken from Auburn et al, 1999, p.51)

Auburn et al observed a three-part organisation to the expression of disbelief within the
police interrogation comprising signalling disbelief, warranting disbelief and inviting a
reformulation from the interviewee. The scepticism of the police officer is initially
indicated in lines 2-5, as the interviewer discounts the version of events provided by
suspect. The police officer accuses the suspect of not only being dishonest with the
institutional 'us' but also engaging in self-deception. The police officer then upgrades
this accusation by replacing the indirect 'you’re not actually being honest with your
self and with us' with an overt accusation of dishonesty, 'I don’t believe that you’re
actually telling the truth' (lines 4-5). The police officer is signalling the inadequacy of
the suspect’s account by implying that there is an objective and coherent description
of the event into which the known ‘facts’ fit and that both the accused and the accuser are in possession of this information.

Following the suspect’s denial in line 6, the police officer’s disbelief is then warranted in lines 7-8. The utterance, ‘Now [nameA] has been stabbed twice and he’s been bitten on the nose’, positions the individual as the perpetrator of a particularly aggressive and irrational offence. The formulation is ‘upgraded’ with extreme formulations of illegitimate and disorderly violence, for example, the terms ‘stab’ and ‘bite’, permitting inferences of the behaviour of an uncontrolled individual. In lines 14-15, the police officer then instructs the suspect to reconsider her denial, ‘think carefully (. ) and answer the question honestly’. The police interviewer creates an expectation that the discrepancy between the accounts of the suspect and the police officer should be resolved through an amendment of the suspect’s original account. Auburn et al conclude that expressions of disbelief are utilised by the police as persuasive devices for evaluating the acceptability of a suspect’s narrative and indicating the relevant content of an institutionally preferred version of events.

Concluding remarks

Few studies address the discursive interaction between police officer and suspect in the investigative interview. There is a particular lack of research concerning police-paedophile interviews, despite the implications of the clash between the ‘physical’ repertoire of direct bodily contact and agency favoured by the police and the ‘emotional’ repertoire of mutual attraction, friendship and affection characteristic of the paedophile. However, the discourse analysis of police interviews with other types of sex offender has identified a number of issues relevant to the study of police-paedophile interviews. The previous investigations have identified rhetorical devices employed by police officers to manage accusation, upgrade accountability and formulate a ‘preferred’, institutionally-recognised version of events. Studies have also demonstrated the use of discursive resources by suspects to mitigate accountability and recast criminal acts as rational, acceptable and justified. However, whilst examining explanations for interpersonal violence and aggression, previous research has failed to determine whether the same devices are used to formulate sexual activity between an adult and a child as rational and justified. It would be fascinating to examine how police
officers and suspects negotiate an account of a paedophilic offence whilst managing the
two conflicting ‘physical’ and ‘emotional’ repertoires. How do police officers obtain a
confession when faced with a suspect determined to either construct the victim as
blameworthy and sexually aware or minimise physical contact with the child as
misconstrued affection? In view of these theoretical considerations, it is evident that
discourse analysis has a great deal to offer the study of paedophile and police talk in
the investigative interview.
CHAPTER 5

MATERIALS AND METHODOLOGY

The pilot study

Acquisition of data

Due to the time constraints involved with obtaining access to highly sensitive police interviews with paedophiles, preliminary material with which to pilot the research was obtained from Dr Dennis Howitt of the Social Sciences Department at Loughborough University. Acquiring pilot data also served as a means of establishing both the existence of a paedophile repertoire and the suitability of discourse analysis to the topic.

Materials

In 1991, Dr Howitt conducted a series of audiotaped interviews with sex offenders at a Sex Offender Treatment Centre in Tampa, Florida (Howitt, 1995). One particular interview, which was not published, involved a 42-year-old male receiving behavioural therapy for an act of indecency with his 13-year-old daughter. The complete interview lasted approximately 40 minutes, however, a 10-minute segment was selected in which the interviewer invites the offender to describe the offence.

Transcription

The interview extract was transcribed using a selection of prosodic symbols taken from the Jefferson system of notation (refer to Table 6 for transcription glossary).
Table 6: Selected transcription glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(0.5)</td>
<td>A number in parentheses represents an interval of silence occurring within and between speaker's utterances in tenths of a second.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(. )</td>
<td>A dot enclosed in a bracket indicates a pause in the talk of less than two-tenths of a second (0.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>=</td>
<td>An 'equals' sign indicates 'latching' that occurs between an utterance and the beginning of the second when there is no intervening pause.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>Square brackets between adjacent lines of concurrent speech indicate the onset and end of overlapping talk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.hhh</td>
<td>A dot before an 'h' indicates an audible in-breath. The more h's, the longer the in-breath.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hhh</td>
<td>An 'h' indicates an audible out-breath. The more h's the longer the out-breath. Set off with parentheses if it occurs within a word.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>!</td>
<td>Exclamation marks indicate an animated or emphatic tone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( ... )</td>
<td>Parentheses indicate the presence of an unclear fragment on the tape. The more '...'s the longer the unclear fragment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.</td>
<td>A full stop indicates a stopping or falling intonation, which may or may not occur at the end of a turn-constructional unit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>,</td>
<td>A comma indicates continuing intonation, which may or may not occur at the end of a turn-constructional unit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under</td>
<td>Underlined fragments indicate speaker emphasis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; &gt;</td>
<td>Arrows pointing outwards indicate that the talk they encompass is slower than the surrounding talk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; &lt;</td>
<td>Arrows pointing inwards indicate that the talk they encompass is faster than the surrounding talk.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Adapted from Hutchby and Wooffitt, 1998, p.vii)

Rather than become over-involved with the technical aspects of how the interviewer and the offender spoke, a nominal sequence of transcription conventions was selected to provide a basic demonstration of the dynamics of the interview. The contributions of the interviewer and the offender were charted by the insertion of the precise beginning and end points of turns, overlaps, interruptions and the duration and characteristics of pauses and emphasis. This permitted an assessment of the practicability of discourse analysis as a methodology, whilst not detracting from what was said. To conform to the ethical requirements of confidentiality, the data was anonymised by removing names and locations that could be attributed to any parties involved in the case, namely the offender, the victim and the legal professionals.
Preliminary discourse analysis

The material was examined using discourse analysis as a means of piloting the chosen methodology. Below is an extract from the preliminary analysis identifying the discursive devices present in the paedophile’s description of his offence.

Pilot interview - Extract 1

Int: W-w-what was the offence?
Off: .hhh uh I sexually abused my-my daughter. It's uh (0.8) to me >sexual abuse is (...) sexual abuse is anything anywhere from pornography on up and what mine was was< holding her to me. Y'know and that was uh that line that was it nothing else happened. .hhh but she felt really uneasy about it,

When invited to describe his offence, the offender initially generates a broad catalogue of abuse ‘from pornography on up’, to an unspecified extreme constructed as less antisocial and more blameworthy than the possession of pornography. The offender then locates his offence at the non-serious end of the indistinguishable array of sexual offences, ‘what mine was was< holding her to me’. The physical act of ‘holding her to me’ does not denote indecency with a child. Despite being asked to define the offence for which he was convicted, the offender does not provide a sexual or criminal account of his crime. The offender has succeeded in minimising the criminality of the act by distancing himself from legal and psychiatric definitions of sex offending. Ekman (1985, cited in Shuy, 1993) claimed that a common practice of suspects in the interview context is to confess to part of what was done, leaving out the most reprehensible acts committed. The offender fails to provide a range of significant details, for example, the position of his arms during the incident, the location of his hands, the victim’s clothing, the motive for the physical contact and his relationship with the victim. The notion of unidentified boundaries is sustained in the suspect’s next utterance, ‘that was uh that line that was it nothing else happened’. Not unlike the ambiguous range of offences ‘from pornography on up’, the suspect avoids specifying which ‘line’, from the numerous physical and moral boundaries in the relationship between an adult and a child, has been crossed. The offender claims that holding the child ‘was it’ and ‘nothing else happened’ and this creates a dilemma.
The physical act of holding implies parental affection and comfort and therefore, does not warrant condemnation and conviction.

The offender follows this vague description of his offence with ‘but she felt really uneasy about it’. This utterance introduces the idea that something felt wrong about the physical contact, yet it immediately externalises the offender’s accountability and minimises the grounds for his conviction. The offender attributes responsibility to the child, implying that the act was merely misconstrued affection (Pollock and Hashmall, 1991). The response of the victim to the physical contact is also minimised by the offender, yet he once again fails to explain what was making her feel uneasy. The victim is not described as experiencing ‘disgust’, ‘fear’, ‘discomfort’ or ‘shame’, suggesting that the consequence of his ‘holding her’ had little in common with typical reactions to sexual abuse.

The transcription is marked with minimising devices such as ‘I don’t know’, ‘I guess’, ‘more or less’ and ‘in a way’ to increase the margin of error and soften the account. The offender frequently substitutes sexual terminology with the passive ‘it’, which plays down the account and depersonalises the act. The utterance distances the offender from the crime and subsequent accountability, as if his characterisation as a convicted paedophile was simply a consequence of the unwarranted reaction of the child. The victim is portrayed as the instigator of the events leading to his prosecution. Sacks (1984, cited in Potter, 1996b) proposed that individuals reporting extraordinary experiences use a distinctive formula, ‘I was just [doing a very mundane thing], when [an exceptional thing happened]’. This method of fact construction establishes ‘out-there-ness’, grounding the incident in normality and externalising the consequences of the act, for example, ‘I was just holding her and she felt uneasy about it’.

To summarise, the appreciation of discursive concepts provides an understanding of how accounts of paedophilic activity are structured and managed. This preliminary examination of the talk of the convicted paedophile supports the notion that there is a specific paedophile repertoire incorporating minimisation and the avoidance of sexual detail and agency. The offender constructs a fascinating account of a ‘crime’ obscured by self-serving descriptions, normalisation and omissions. However, it is
necessary to be aware of the limitations of the pilot data. A social science investigation has a different agenda and purpose than the police investigation. Dr Howitt conducted his interviews with paedophiles to gain an insight into the lifestyles, fantasies and motivations of those who sexually offend against children. However, rather than explore why they did it, the police officer needs to know if they actually did.

It is essential to examine whether these processes emerge in the naturally occurring investigative interview between the police officer and the suspected paedophile. Do paedophiles tell the same stories in the police interview as they do in the social science interview? How do the minimisation devices of the paedophile affect the outcome of the interrogation? How do police officers deal with self-serving accounts in a context that relies on the factual reporting of criminal activity for the purpose of conviction? The next stage of the research was to obtain police interview material to explore the negotiation of paedophile and police descriptions of sexual contact in the investigative interview.

The main study

Acquisition of data

To obtain access to police interviews conducted with paedophiles, Suffolk, Merseyside, Nottinghamshire, Metropolitan, Derbyshire and Leicestershire Police Constabularies were contacted. Following a number of refusals to be granted access to data, the Chief Inspector of Leicestershire Constabulary Child Protection Unit was keen to discuss the aims of the investigation and data requirements. After completing the relevant security checks, permission was given to examine officially recorded interviews between police officers and paedophiles.

Materials

Eleven of the most appropriate interviews were identified following discussions with the interviewing officers within the Child Protection Unit (refer to Table 7 for details
of the interviews). The allegations adhere to both legal and psychiatric definitions of paedophilia. In British law, sexual offences against children are catalogued in terms of *gross indecency* and *indecent assault*, physical contact, which is sexual in nature, when the victim is under 14 years, (Indecency with children act 1960) and *taking and/or possessing indecent photographs of children* when the victim is under 16 years, (Protection of children act 1978). Several offences incorporate more than one offence, for example, the *buggery, rape* and *attempted rape* (Sexual offences act 1956) of a child. The offences are also paedophilic in nature according to DSM-IV-TR criteria. Paedophilia is categorised as 'recurrent, intense, sexually arousing fantasies, sexual urges or behaviors involving sexual activity with a prepubescent child or children (generally age 13 years or younger)...the person is at least age 16 years and at least five years older than the child or children' (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition, Text Revision, 2000).

The interviews were conducted in a specially equipped interview room in the Child Protection Unit between 2000-2001 and were tape recorded as part of the requirements of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) of 1984. The interviewers were male Detective Constables, also based at the Child Protection Unit. Additional interviewing officers and solicitors were present during the interviews, however, the primary interviewers and the suspects were the only audible speakers in the extracts selected for discourse analysis. In each interview, the suspects were being questioned for the first time following arrest and had not yet been charged.

All of the offenders were male, aged between 34-54 years from the Leicestershire area. All were known by their victims as friends of the family, neighbours or teachers. The victims were both male (n=5) and female (n=6), aged between 5-13 years, also from the Leicestershire area. In addition to the age of the victim, Table 7 also indicates the age of the victim at the onset and the end of the abuse if the period was particularly prolonged. Despite the fact that all of the suspects were ultimately convicted of their offences, five of the suspects responded to the accusations with admissions and five responded with denials. This enabled examination of the association between police questioning and denial/admission. All of the suspects were subsequently convicted of the offences, which ensured that the research did not become a comparative analysis of guilty and innocent discourse.
Table 7: Details of interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Age of suspect</th>
<th>Offence</th>
<th>Gender of victim</th>
<th>Age of victim</th>
<th>Response of suspect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>Indecent photographs of children, gross indecency</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>9-13</td>
<td>Admission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>Gross indecency</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>8-12</td>
<td>Denial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>Indecent assault, buggery</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Admission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4a*</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>Indecent assault</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Admission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4b*</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>Indecent assault</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Admission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>Indecent assault</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Admission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>Indecent assault</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Admission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Gross indecency, attempted rape, rape</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Denial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Gross indecency</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Denial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>Gross indecency</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Denial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>Indecent assault</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>5-10</td>
<td>Denial</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The fourth interview is divided into two as it mentions two separate victims/offences within the same interview.

Transcription

The data had to remain within the Child Protection Unit and the audio reproduction of material was not permitted. Subsequently, the interviews were transcribed in their entirety from the onset (the interview preliminaries, introductions and conditions of arrest) to the termination of the interview using the Jefferson system of notation (refer to Table 8 for transcription glossary).
Table 8: Complete transcription glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(0.5)</td>
<td>A number in parentheses represents an interval of silence occurring within and between speaker’s utterances in tenths of a second.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(.)</td>
<td>A dot enclosed in a bracket indicates a pause in the talk of less than two-tenths of a second (0.2).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>=</td>
<td>An ‘equals’ sign indicates ‘latching’ that occurs between an utterance and the beginning of the second when there is no intervening pause.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>Square brackets between adjacent lines of concurrent speech indicate the onset and end of overlapping talk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.hhh</td>
<td>A dot before an ‘h’ indicates an audible in-breath. The more h’s, the longer the in-breath.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hhh</td>
<td>An ‘h’ indicates an audible out-breath. The more h’s the longer the out-breath. Set off with parentheses if it occurs within a word.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>A dash indicates the sharp cut-off of the prior word or sound.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>:</td>
<td>Colons indicate that the speaker has stretched the preceding sound. The more colons the greater the sustained enunciation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>!</td>
<td>Exclamation marks indicate an animated or emphatic tone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(...)</td>
<td>Parentheses indicate the presence of an unclear fragment on the tape. The more ‘…’s the longer the unclear fragment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.</td>
<td>A full stop indicates a stopping or falling intonation, which may or may not occur at the end of a turn-constructional unit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>,</td>
<td>A comma indicates continuing intonation, which may or may not occur at the end of a turn-constructional unit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?</td>
<td>A question mark indicates rising inflection, which may or may not indicate a question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under</td>
<td>Underlined fragments indicate speaker emphasis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAPITALS</td>
<td>Capital letters indicate speech louder than the surrounding talk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**</td>
<td>Degree signs indicate that the talk they encompass is quieter than the surrounding talk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**</td>
<td>Asterisks indicate that the talk they encompass is croakier than the surrounding talk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;&gt;</td>
<td>Arrows pointing outwards indicate that the talk they encompass is slower than the surrounding talk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; &lt;</td>
<td>Arrows pointing inwards indicate that the talk they encompass is faster than the surrounding talk.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Adapted from Hutchby and Wooffitt, 1998, p.vii)

For the main study, the complete series of prosodic symbols was utilised to chronicle the recorded interaction as thoroughly as possible. In addition to the transcription conventions utilised in the pilot analysis, the fundamental architecture of the interview was suffused with further paralinguistic features to differentiate unusual speech delivery from the surrounding talk. These included the shortening (dash), truncation (colon), stress and volume (capitalisation, degree signs and asterisks) of individual words and syllables. Once again, to conform to the ethical requirements of confidentiality, the data was anonymised by removing names and locations that could be attributed to parties involved in the case.
Prior to the discursive examination of the interaction between police officer and paedophile in the investigative interview, it is beneficial to establish whether the physical repertoire was characteristic of police talk and the emotional repertoire was characteristic of suspect talk, as suggested in the previous literature and pilot analysis. Content analysis was selected as a supplementary methodology to provide an initial summary of the interview transcriptions. Not unlike discourse analysis, content analysis has a basis in the qualitative understanding of data and recognises the vital relationship between data content and context (Krippendorff, 1980). The data reduction technique also offers a statistical reliability and replicability, not commonly associated with social constructionist methodologies, on which to progress with the discourse analysis.

**Repertoires**

*The existence of repertoires*

Whilst scrutinising the interview transcriptions a list of terms was collated with the intention of differentiating the two repertoires. Sixty-two terms were perceived to epitomise the physical and emotional discourses. These terms incorporated 20 ‘physical’ references to sexual contact and 42 ‘emotional’ references to interpersonal bonds between the suspect and the alleged victim (see Table 10, Appendix 1). The terms were mutually exclusive and exhaustive, for example, ‘sex’ was distinct from the term ‘oral sex’ when it was used in isolation in the same way that ‘penetration’ was differentiated from ‘digital penetration’. To confirm the existence of the distinctive ‘emotional’ and ‘physical’ repertoires, the frequency of each physical and emotional term spoken by each speaker was quantified. This was accomplished by recording the incidence of specific words used, rather than general references to
sexual contact. For example, in the following extract, the terms ‘penis’ and ‘vagina’ were each recorded as being spoken twice by the police officer:

Extract 1 - Interview 1

DC: But what we’ve been able to clarify from what you’ve said yourself this picture shows part of your penis in the entrance of her vagina, you’re telling me that about half an inch of your penis is in the entrance of her vagina,

The 11 interview transcriptions were subjected to content analysis using this corpus of physical and emotional terms and the incidence of terms spoken and associated speaker were quantified (see Table 11, Appendix 1).

Graph 1: Incidence of physical and emotional repertoire term use by police and suspects

The physical repertoire terms were more frequently used by the police officers, while the suspects exhibited a preference for the emotional repertoire terms. It was interesting to note that the most frequently occurring emotional repertoire term was ‘relationship’, an expression which could be associated with either a sexual union or a bond of friendship, which was used by the suspect 22 times and the police 12 times. The most frequently used physical repertoire term was ‘vagina’ for the police interviewers with 44 counts and ‘pornography’ for the suspects with 11 counts. To
establish the statistical significance of these apparent trends, chi-square analysis was conducted on the total numbers of physical and emotional terms used by the police officers and suspects to determine the presence of an association between the two variables speaker and repertoire. It was found that there was a significant association between the variables \( \chi^2 = 125.518; \text{df} = 1; \ p < 0.01 \). The strength of the association was also deemed significant \( \Phi = 0.480; \ p < 0.01 \).

**The location of repertoires**

It was also interesting to explore the significance of *when* the suspects and police officers used these repertoires. Content analysis was used to establish the frequency of the speaker’s use of physical and emotional repertoire terms when introduced:

1. *Before* the other speaker: the repertoire term is not preceded by the same term in the previous sequential utterance.

2. *After* the other speaker: the repertoire term is used immediately after the same repertoire term has been used in the previous sequential utterance.

The specified ‘term range’ of one sequential utterance by the other speaker was introduced as a means of facilitating systematisation and quantification. It was considered that increasing the number of potential utterances in which to quantify further terms would also increase difficulty. For example, the use of the physical repertoire term ‘penetration’ by a police officer at the commencement of an interview, using the remainder of the interview as a potential term range, would necessitate the quantification of all suspect utterances of ‘penetration’ as ‘after the other speaker’. This would be problematic to quantify and may neglect other physical or emotional repertoire terms that may occur within the term range. There are also potential difficulties involved with the introduction of other speakers within the increased term range, such as solicitors or additional interviewing officers. The purpose of the research is to monitor emotional and physical descriptions of the same paedophilic activities. Therefore, it is clear that the analysis of discursive interactions within adjacent utterances would be beneficial.

Extract 2 - Interview 4b
DC: Do you want to tell us about Danielle?

Susp: Umm, Danielle was somebody that requested to come into my class, she was with me for two years, and she used to come up to me (.) just about every day and stand with me in the playground or at the door? And it took a long while to nurture her onto other pupils >so that she would play with other pupils< (.) and not be with me all the time?

DC: °Right?°

Susp: Yes, because she was running up to me so often (.) again we did develop a sort of rapport . hhh ummm >very often in lesson times< she would come crying and sit next to me wherever I was . hhhh to help with work or (1.4) just for general (.) consoling,

DC: As part of that consoling would you ever cuddle her and put your arms round her.

Susp: Umm I think probably >yes I have.<

The previous extract provides five counts of emotional repertoire term use, three spoken by the suspect before the police officer and two spoken by the police officer, one before and one after the suspect. The three emotional repertoire terms spoken by the suspect, ‘nurture’, ‘rapport’ and ‘consoling’, are not preceded by the same repertoire term in the previous sequential utterance and are subsequently recorded as spoken before the police officer. The police officer then uses the emotional repertoire term ‘consoling’ immediately after the use of the same term in the previous sequential utterance by the suspect. Finally, the police officer uses the emotional repertoire term ‘cuddle’, which is not preceded by the same repertoire term in the previous sequential utterance and is subsequently recorded as spoken before the suspect. The 11 interview transcriptions were subjected to content analysis using this corpus of terms and the sequential positioning of terms spoken and associated speaker were quantified (see Table 12 and Table 13, Appendix 1).
The police officers introduced physical terms more frequently before the suspect used them, while the suspects used emotional terms more often before the police used them. To assess the statistical significance of these observations, chi-square analysis was once again employed to determine the presence of an association between the two variables speaker and repertoire when the repertoire term was introduced independently, before the other speaker. It was found that there was a significant association between the variables $\chi^2 = 171.933$; df = 1; $p<0.01$. The strength of the association was also deemed significant $\Phi = .589$; $p<0.01$. 
The suspects used physical repertoire terms after the other speaker more frequently than the police, while the police officers used emotional repertoire terms after the other speaker more often than the suspects. In terms of statistical significance, chi-square analysis was used to determine the presence of an association between the two variables speaker and repertoire when the repertoire term was used immediately after the other speaker, in the next utterance. It was found that there was a significant association between the variables $\chi^2 = 12.662$; df = 1; p<0.01. The strength of the association was also deemed significant $\Phi = .503$; p<0.01.

**Euphemism**

**The existence of euphemism**

It was also apparent that both the police officers and the suspects substituted a number of the physical repertoire terms with 'euphemisms'. These euphemisms were utilised as softer, more polite versions of the sexual terms, for example the use of 'willy' in place of 'penis'. There were 29 euphemisms, each offering an alternative to a specific physical repertoire term (see Table 14, Appendix 1). To establish whether
the use of euphemisms was characteristic of police officer or suspect discourse, the frequency of each euphemism was documented. The terms were mutually exclusive and exhaustive, only the *exact* expression was documented. The 11 interview transcriptions were subjected to content analysis using this corpus of euphemisms and the incidence of euphemisms used and the associated speaker were quantified (see Table 15, Appendix 1).

Graph 4: Incidence of physical repertoire and euphemism use by police and suspects

The suspects employed euphemisms in place of the physical repertoire terms more frequently than the police officers, while the police officers more often opted for the associated physical repertoire term. To establish the statistical significance, chi-square analysis was conducted on the total euphemisms used compared to the total physical repertoire terms used by the police officers and suspects to determine the presence of an association between the two variables *speaker* and *choice of term*. It was found that there was a significant association between the variables $\chi^2 = 65.964; \text{df} = 1; p<0.01$. The strength of the association was also deemed significant $\Phi=0.361; p<0.01$. 
The location of euphemism

It was also interesting to explore the significance of when the suspects and police officers used these euphemisms. Content analysis was used to establish the frequency of the speaker’s use of euphemisms when introduced before the other speaker. This was compared to the frequency of the speaker’s use of euphemisms when introduced immediately after the other speaker used the same euphemism in the previous sequential utterance. The operational definitions of ‘before other speaker’ and ‘after other speaker’ were taken from the previous discussion. The 11 interview transcriptions were subjected to content analysis using this corpus of euphemisms and the sequential positioning of euphemisms used and associated speaker were quantified (see Table 16, Appendix 1).

Graph 5: Incidence of euphemism use by police and suspects before and after other speaker uses euphemism

The police officers used more euphemisms before the suspects used the same euphemism, while the suspects used more euphemisms immediately after the police used them. Chi-square analysis was used to determine the presence of an association between the two variables speaker and positioning. It was found that there was a significant association between the variables $\chi^2 = 52.888; \text{df} = 1; p<0.01$. The strength
of the association was also deemed significant $\Phi = .507$; $p<0.01$. When taking into account what expressions these euphemisms followed, it was apparent that when the police used the euphemisms after the suspects, they used the same euphemism. However, when the suspects used a euphemism, it was often employed as a means of substituting the actual physical repertoire term used by the police.

Extract 3 - Interview 1

DC: ...there’s one or two pictures in here that if you look at umm Lucy’s vagina and anal areas they’re really quite red.
Susp: That’s. Because. I rubbed-my-penis up and down between her cheeks.

The previous extract illustrates the use of a euphemism, in this case, ‘between the cheeks’, which has been introduced by the suspect immediately after the use of the associated physical term, ‘anal’, in the previous sequential utterance by the police officer. It was also interesting to note that the police officers frequently employed euphemisms when directly quoting from the statements of alleged victims,

Extract 4 - Interview 10

DC: Charlotte actually said it’s been going on since she was four or five .huhh >so what been happening< and she said, he’s been touching me and feeling me and things (2.5) w-what do you mean by that? She explained .huhh been playing with my boobs.

The previous extract demonstrates a police officer directly quoting from the statement of an alleged victim when utilising the euphemism ‘boobs’. This introduced an interesting issue concerning the source of the euphemisms employed within the context of the investigative interview and whether these sources differed between speakers. To establish whether these particular ‘quoted’ euphemisms were characteristic of police officer or suspect discourse, the source of each euphemism was documented. The euphemisms deemed to be ‘quotations’ were phrased in such a way that the speaker appears to recount the statement of the alleged victim, for example, ‘What Sarah does describe...’ (interview 2), ‘what Vicky is saying is...’ (interview 7) and ‘Matthew is saying that...’ (interview 9). The 11 interview
transcriptions were subjected to content analysis using this corpus of euphemisms and the source of the euphemism used and the associated speaker were quantified (see Table 17, Appendix 1).

Graph 6: Incidence of euphemism use independently or as quotation by police and suspects

The police officers used more euphemisms in the form of quotations than the suspects, who used euphemisms independently. Chi-square analysis was used to determine the presence of an association between the two variables speaker and source of euphemism. It was found that there was a significant association between the variables $\chi^2 = 84.244; \text{df} = 1; p<0.01$. The strength of the association was also deemed significant $\Phi = .639; p<0.01$.

Concluding remarks

It is evident that, within the confines of the investigative interviews, police officers and paedophiles use description differently. The suspected paedophiles employ a specific repertoire of relationships terms and euphemisms, while the police officers utilise graphic, sexual detail. The emotional repertoire is not satisfactory for obtaining accurate descriptions of criminal behaviour for the purpose of conviction. Therefore,
it is in the police officer's interests to encourage the suspect to utilise agentic, bodily details when discussing sexual offences. The quantitative analysis reveals a number of interesting associations between type of speaker and the use of physical and emotional descriptions of paedophilic acts. However, despite the fact that quantitative analysis has confirmed that a suspect uses the euphemism 'between the cheeks' immediately after a police officer uses the term 'anal', it cannot address the potential implications of these tendencies for the elicitation of information in the police interview. The suspects regularly used the word 'it' to represent a sexual act with a child, yet the implications of such delicate expressions would require a more in-depth qualitative exploration of the transcriptions. What exactly is happening when the police officers and suspects utilise these repertoires? What happens when individuals 'switch' repertoires, for example from a characteristic to a non-characteristic repertoire? When the police use emotional repertoire are they adapting to the tone set by the suspect as a means of engaging them or eliciting information?
Chapter 6 utilised quantitative analysis to confirm that the police officers used physical repertoire terms more frequently than the suspected paedophiles, while the suspected paedophiles preferred emotional repertoire terms and euphemisms. Discourse analysis will now investigate what happens when the police officers and suspects utilise these repertoires in the investigative interview. The first episode demonstrates the use of relationship talk by the suspect and the police officer. The bond between the suspected paedophile and the child is delicately characterised by the police officer as an attachment of innocence and ‘feelings’ in the use of emotional repertoire terms and euphemisms, which is then confirmed by the suspect. By attending to past events, the police officer constructs the idea of ‘relationship’ development, retaining the emotional repertoire whilst implicitly suggesting sexual activity.

‘Bright little kid’

Extract 1 - Interview 1

106 DC: What—what would dictate (1.2) uh whether or not you would be able to see her or get together
107 with her?
108
109 Susp: Just uh, what—what load I’ve got on at the park and whether or not I would be able to spend the
110 time (. ) going round with her, uh, during that
111 period.
112 (2.0)
113
114 DC: Once this had all started then hhh (0.6) when you—when you first started taking to her—her
115 to the park and you got to know the family
116 (1.2) w—what were your feelings towards Lucy.
117 (2.0)
118
119 Susp: °Bright little kid." (0.6) uh somebody who’s
120 interested in wildlife and I started showing
A fascinating example of the police interviewer using relationship talk early in the questioning is evident in line 114. The interviewer adopts repertoire terms and euphemisms typically associated with the paedophile to address the emotional association between suspect and child. The narrative commences with ‘Once this had all started’, a formulation which sets the scene and attends to the minimisation and vagueness characteristic of paedophile discourse. To identify ‘this’, it is necessary to consider the previous question-answer pairing of lines 106-112. The police officer characterises the early activity between suspect and child as ‘to see her or get together with her’, vague and euphemistic and marked with conversational difficulty in the form of noticeable stuttering and hesitation, ‘what-what would dictate (1.2) uh’. This question invites, and is subsequently followed by, an equally innocuous response. The two individuals do not appear to be discussing the particulars of an initial meeting between a paedophile and his victim, more the early stages of an adult friendship. The suspect confirms the police officer’s euphemistic conceptualisation of ‘this’ by adding ‘spend the time (. ) going round with her’. It is also apparent in the first utterance, ‘what would dictate (1.2) uh whether or not you would be able to see her...’ that the police officer invites the suspect to provide externalised reasons for the companionship, ‘what would dictate’ rather than ‘who’. This externalisation is demonstrated in the following response, ‘what load I’ve got on at the park’. His role and responsibilities as park keeper determine whether he meets the child rather than his interest or attraction, the intervention of her family or the preferences of the victim. It is interesting to note the final utterance of the suspect in lines 111-112, ‘during that period’. The suspect locates these events, the innocence of ‘seeing her’, ‘getting together with her’, ‘spending the time going round with her’ and of
companionship dictated by his role as park keeper, in the past. This implies a sense of change and development to justify arriving at the present.

The police officer continues in lines 115-116, 'when your-when you first started taking to her-her to the park and you got to know the family', recounting additional events to clarify the historical period in question. The significance of taking the child to the park and becoming familiar with her family once more directs the narrative towards 'relationship' talk, rather than questioning the onset of sexual activity. This is reinforced in 'w-what were your feelings towards Lucy', a question inviting relationship discourse from the suspect. It could be argued that 'feelings' denote emotions beyond that of a friendship with the child of a neighbour. The suspect is not asked if he had feelings for the victim, rather what were those feelings. The existence of feelings could be perceived as either innocent or sexual, yet the question permits an innocent response. The police officer invites the suspect to recount his feelings towards the victim in a non-threatening question devoid of action and sexual/criminal terminology. This is illustrated in the innocuous response of the suspect in line 119.

Following a significant hesitation in line 118, the suspect responds with 'bright little kid', clearly an appropriate description of a 9-year-old girl by her 52-year-old neighbour. However, considering the police officer's request for 'feelings', the suspect provides a response which avoids emotions, for example, the utterance does not commence with 'I feel...about Lucy'. The suspect provides a non-criminal and non-sexual account of the child, describing her character and actions whilst detracting from his own, 'somebody who's interested in wildlife and I started showing her the wildlife'. The description 'bright little kid...interested in wildlife' serves to distance him from the potential incrimination of having 'feelings' towards the child. By constructing an image of an inquisitive, intelligent child, the suspect is imbuing her with curiosity and maturity. This account, coupled with the knowledge that the suspect is a park keeper lessens his responsibility and provides a justification for the encounters. An indirect device for attributing blame is role talk, where acting in line with a particular personality or occupation is discursively deployed as a form of attributional accounting (Edwards and Potter, 1992). As an older, wiser 'guide' he is simply encouraging an inquisitive child and enabling her to benefit from his work experience. The appropriateness of the relationship is suggested by the innocence of
the question-answer pairing and the depiction of a ‘normal’ adult-child companionship.

In line 122, the police officer invites the suspect to provide further description of the ‘relationship’, orienting to the emotive discourse of the suspect. The ‘bright little kid’ account is treated as an appropriate start to the narrative in that the interviewer does not repeat the question or indicate dissatisfaction with the response. The suspect’s feelings or the details surrounding the start of the relationship are not challenged. The police officer is more interested in the events leading up to and resulting in sexual contact between the suspect and the child, the reasons for the arrest rather than the feelings of the suspect. It may also suggest that the suspect’s avoidance of talking about his explicit feelings and motivations incites the police officer to reformulate the initial question to re-establish intimacy, physical contact and intent.

The police officer resumes the questioning with ‘And (. )’. The reformulation of the suspect’s account, from ‘during that period’ into the more explicit ‘three years ago’, serves to locate the narrative and the concept of ‘bright little kid’ in the past. This summarising of the ‘gist’ of a speaker’s previous utterance ‘is common in institutionalised, audience-directed interaction” (Heritage, 1985, cited in Hutchby and Wooffitt, 1998, p.152). The police interviewer constructs a more precise timeframe, ‘this was about three years ago you say’, as a means of placing information the suspect has clearly provided off the record (due to its absence in the interview transcription) on the audiotape of the police interview. The rhetorical device of ‘recruiting the record’ (Antaki and Leudar, 2001) attributes specific detail to the discourse of the conversational opponent, subsequently diminishing the interest and partiality of the surrounding message. The significant pause ‘three years ago you say so (1.6)’ would have enabled the suspect to interrupting with ‘no, I didn’t say that’ or ‘it wasn’t three years ago’, but he chooses not to deny the allegation and the information is put on the record. In the statement, the police interviewer is seeking confirmation that the suspect was aware that the victim was 9 years old at the onset of the offending and the relationship between the paedophile and the child endured a ‘development’ of increased physical closeness.
The police officer's invitation to 'take me through that relationship' indicates knowledge of a 'transition', the idea that the feelings of the suspect towards the victim must have changed from 'bright little kid' to justify his arrest. It assumes that the relationship is now less than innocent and invites an account of the events that occurred during the previous three years to the point where the suspect is being questioned for acts of gross indecency. The utterance, 'how did it develop', skilfully addresses the notion of relationship development and of course, if the contact is between a 'mature' male and female there is a suggestion that this contact will be sexual in nature. The police interviewer seeks a physical account, from initial 'feelings' to 'the point where...here today', whilst avoiding sexual/criminal discourse and adopting the relationship talk and euphemism characteristic of the suspect. This form of questioning enables the suspect to continue with his narrative of friendship and innocence, a more direct question concerning bodily or sexual contact almost certainly inviting a denial. The police officer's speech is hesitant and suggests conversational difficulty. The use of euphemisms such as 'it' and 'y'know' avoid any sexual or criminal detail, minimise the acts of indecency and imply a shared understanding between the interviewer and the suspect. The interviewer would expect a response portraying a sequence of events culminating in the incident that led to his arrest.

At this point, unless the suspect chooses to deny the allegations he must provide a narrative account of transition, constructing the development of the role of the victim, his feelings or the relationship to explain how the concept of 'bright little kid' became something less innocent. The suspect treats the question, 'how did it develop' as concerning the sexual component of the relationship and the ambiguous 'here today' as representing his arrest for sexual offences. The absence of direct sexual/criminal discourse enables the suspect to tell his story, avoiding direct bodily and physical language. In line 126, the suspect does not commence by describing the requested sequence of events culminating in his arrest. He selects one event to epitomise the transition from innocent to not so innocent, 'Well she picked up on uh...' immediately portraying the victim as an active agent in the event. However, this utterance is then reformulated 'Well she picked up on uh (2.4) I opened my car b-uh-boot one day'. It can be argued that the original formulation would have depicted the victim as reacting to the behaviour or actions of the suspect, for example, 'she picked
up on...the fact that I had magazines in my car'. The suspect then offers a self-repair following a prolonged pause and reconstructs the event as more factual and normalised, ‘I opened my car b-uh-boot one day an-and inadvertently there were some magazines there’. The first mention of sexual activity between the suspect and the child is associated with an accident, when the child ‘inadvertently’ saw the suspect’s pornography.

The use of the rather commonplace ‘I opened my car boot one day...’ before recounting an unusual event is a means of grounding it in normality (Wooffitt, 1992). It is a discursive device for the production of ordinariness in a rhetorical sense, a routine feature of reporting dubious or unusual experiences. It can be likened to Sacks’ ‘I was just doing X...when Y’, a two-part device which occurs in spoken recollections of extraordinary experiences used by speakers to counter potentially negative or unsympathetic inferences (1984, cited in Potter, 1996b). The ‘X’ represents the speaker’s activity or state, in this case, a normal male opening his car boot, and the ‘Y’ is a description of the speaker’s first awareness of the particular phenomenon, the realisation that a child was looking. This enables the suspect to distance himself, his actions and intentions from the consequences. The normalising utterance ‘one day’ implies that the day in question could have been any day; there was nothing special about this particular day. The ‘magazines’ are not described as pornography, a more suitable description of the material. However, it is acceptable for a mature male to possess pornographic material, more acceptable than to admit to sexual relations with a child.

The incident is portrayed as accidental, lessening his responsibility and placing blame on external circumstances. The victim becomes the central character and her reactions to his innocuous opening of the car boot are pivotal to the account, ‘s-she° hhh very interested in them and curious etc’. This reinforces his characterisation of Lucy as an inquisitive child. The victim is portrayed as a ‘bright little kid’, intelligent and agentic, whether the suspect is describing her interest in wildlife or the pornography in his car. The suspect lessens the individuality of the victim and normalises the incident by claiming, ‘ch-children of that age w-would be’. This attends to common knowledge and the generalised notion of inquisitive children. It also performs the
delicate task of ascribing responsibility to the victim (she was very interested and curious) yet she is not entirely blamed (children are like that). The use of 'I would imagine' is used to express doubt and make him seem more 'reasonable' (Edwards, 1997). It is also a defence which implies uncertainty and a lack of knowledge regarding the sexual interest in children. The suspect succeeds in recasting events in which the victim becomes the agent whilst attending to the fallibility of memory and displaying concern for truth and accuracy. Once again, the suspect describes the actions of the victim in such a way to minimise the seriousness of his own actions.

When invited to take the police officer 'through that relationship', the suspect selects one event which, to him, encapsulates the required 'transition'. It can be argued that one depiction of child eagerness is not an adequate account of the three years leading to his arrest. However, in response to the subsequent repair, 'how did it develop to the point where (0.8) y'know, hhh (...) here today', the incident is representative of change. The detective constable does not indicate that the response is inappropriate and encourages the suspect to continue his narrative, 'Mmm'. This is followed by 'then it developed from there' in which the euphemistic and externalised 'it' is employed to denote progression to sexual activity. 'There' represents the victim's curiosity following the inadvertent exposure to pornographic material. This is a narrative recounting a transition from innocence to sexuality and the suspect's response indicates that he has indeed interpreted the previous question in this way. The child's interest becomes a pivotal factor in the instigation of sexual activity, a common justification by paedophiles for sexual acts with children (Howitt, 1995). There is no mention of the responsibility of the suspect due to the externalisation of agency and victim-blame.

The previous analysis has demonstrated how, by using the emotional repertoire, the police officer can adapt to the tone set by the suspect as a means of engaging them or eliciting information. In the skilled use of relationship talk, the police officer encourages the suspect to generate a narrative of innocence, friendship and victim maturity. The police officer then attends to the suspect's account of past events, the innocence of 'getting together with her' in the park, to suggest transition, a sense of change and development to justify arriving at the present. This extract reveals significant movement in both the characterisation of the victim and the description of the relationship. The following extract focuses on a portrayal of the victim which is
more than the ‘bright little kid’. As the interest of the victim in wildlife and ultimately sexual behaviour ‘developed from there’, as does her role on the progression of sexual activity. The suspect’s utterance ‘it developed from there’ implies that there is more of this sexual activity to come, in a narrative that will bring this account up to the present day. In the next extract, the suspect continues to utilise minimisation, normalisation and victim-blame in a further account of relationship transition.

‘Just good friends’

Extract 2 - Interview 1

223 DC: Right were you flattered by what you saw as the attentions of a much younger (. ) [person.]
224 Susp: [I was ] of course I was fla(hh)tttered. (1.0) Very much so.
226 DC: How did you, how did you view your relationship, with Lucy (. ) [as it developed. ]
227 Susp: [Just good friends] I mean .hhh we could we could we could go on, n-n-not bother about anything then other times I said how’dya feel and she said oh yeah she was .hhh I’m not saying this as any disrespect towards Lucy but she (. ) quite enjoyed being uh the little sessions.
231 DC: Right you mean the-the sexual ses[sions. ]
232 Susp: [But even] th-
233 that’s no excuse for what I did. I must emphasise that, it’s no excuse and I know (. )
234 235 236 237 238 239 240 241

This extract is pivotal in the exploration of inappropriate descriptions as it represents a shift from the safe discourse of ‘bright little kid’ to the inference of sexual contact in ‘just good friends’. The police interviewer continues this unfolding narrative with ‘Right’, indicating acceptance of what the suspect has said and a change of direction, an interest in more recent activities. In lines 223-224, the police interviewer generates a scenario involving the attentions of a younger female for an older male, an utterance devoid of specifically sexual or criminal terminology. The police interviewer employs the notion of flattery to suggest that the victim’s interest in wildlife, which would not have induced feelings of flattery in the suspect, has progressed to an interest in him. This conveys a sexual implication and attributes the instigation of sexual attention to the paedophile. The police interviewer adopts the suspect’s strategies of minimisation.
and normalisation by describing the victim as a neutralised ‘younger person’ rather than ‘Lucy’ or ‘child’. This also attends to the common paedophile misperception of mutual attraction with a younger sexual partner (Howitt, 1998). However, the footing ‘what you saw’ readdresses the accountability of the suspect and distances the police interviewer from the suspect’s formulation of the incident. The interviewer does not ask, ‘was the younger person attracted to you?’ a closed question explicitly addressing the agency of the victim, due to the potential for an outright denial on the part of the suspect. The attentions of the younger person are portrayed as experienced, and agreement with ‘were you flattered’ implies agreement with ‘what you saw as the attentions of a much younger person’. The distinctive event construction of ‘what you saw as the attentions of a much younger (. ) person.’ is delicately managed. The use of the ambiguous ‘younger person’ implies an individual older and more capable of inducing flattery than a ‘bright little kid’. This normalising description could easily be referring to a romantic partnership between a middle-aged male and a slightly younger female in its avoidance of the concept of paedophilia. However, the question is potentially incriminating as the victim is described as ‘much younger’, in this case, than the 52-year-old suspect, as opposed to being merely ‘younger’.

In line 225, the suspect interrupts the police interviewer prior to the completion of his turn. This could have been due to the presence of a pause and subsequent ‘transitional relevance place’ (Sacks et al, 1978, cited in Nofsinger, 1991) or the suspect hastening to agree. The emphatic ‘of course’ and ‘very’ normalise the suggestion, implying that flattery would be a natural response to the sexual advances of a younger person. However, agreeing to feelings of flattery creates difficulty for the suspect and introduces more of a sexual tone than the chastised ‘bright little kid’ of the previous extract. The sexual interest of a 9-year-old female for a 52-year-old male would typically met by avoidance and concern for the welfare of the child and the suspect must negotiate the dilemma of conveying the potential reciprocation of these attentions. The police interviewer treats this response as satisfactory by continuing with the next question.

The police interviewer attends to the suspect’s formulation of the incident in lines 228-229 by minimising the contact between the perpetrator and the victim as a ‘relationship’, rather than ‘offence’ or ‘sexual acts’. The question ‘how did you view
your relationship with Lucy (. ) as it developed.' invites the suspect to explain this attachment whilst managing a topic change from internalised feelings to direct involvement with the victim. The utterance seeks confirmation that the suspect perceived himself to be in 'relationship' ('how did you view') whilst encompassing an accusation (you had a 'relationship with Lucy'). The interviewer avoids asking 'did you have a relationship with Lucy?' due to the potential for an outright denial. Rather, the police interviewer depicts the bond between the paedophile and the child as experienced so that a response to 'how did you view' implies agreement with 'your relationship...as it developed'. The police officer once again constructs the relationship as enduring a progression, retaining the emotional repertoire whilst implicitly implying the commencement of sexual activity. The question invites the suspect to clarify his perceptions of the events culminating in his arrest. The police interviewer also utilises the euphemistic discourse characteristic of the paedophile in 'as it developed'. The use of 'it' to represent the sexual contact between adult and child is ambiguous and normalises an abnormal situation.

The seemingly innocuous 'just good friends' in line 230 creates difficulty for the suspect. In an attempt to normalise the bond, the suspect employs a cliché. However, the utterance represents appropriate 'relationship' discourse for the wrong relationship. 'Just good friends' is a denial when the individuals in question are potential candidates for a sexual partnership, 'we're not having sex but we could be'. A 9-year-old female and a 52-year-old male are not conventional candidates for either a sexual relationship or a good friendship. The use of the modifier 'just' is a rhetorical defence with a mitigating function, as in simply or only good friends, a means of downplaying an offence and disclaiming blameworthiness (Lee, 1987, Shweder and Much, 1987, cited in Billig, 1999). In 'The Semantics of Just', Lee (1987) differentiated the contrastive 'just' which minimises the significance of a focal process by explicit comparison with a referent process, 'I'm not hurting the child, just showing love' (Jenkins-Hall, 1989, cited in Howitt, 1995, p.93), and the non-contrastive 'just', 'One offender told me that the abuse of his daughter happened when he turned round and his penis just went in her mouth' (Wyre, 1989, p.19). Such rhetorical defences are characteristic of the interpretive framework of the paedophile, enabling them to justify the offending behaviour and construe the motives of the victims as sexual. The utterance 'just good friends' conveys what it strives to deny
and the suspect succeeds in both addressing and evading the sexual component of the accusation. In ‘Freudian Repression’, Billig claims that such discursive dilemmas support the notion that language is inherently expressive and repressive:

...speakers can switch the topics of talk almost imperceptibly...these little words allow us to change the topics of our internal thought, thereby driving away uncomfortable desires...

(Billig, 1999, p.4)

It is argued that a conversational move towards a topic is simultaneously a conscious move away from another, often those which are particularly embarrassing or troubling. It is this idea of the unsaid that can provide a clue about the rhetorical nature of repression. In this example, ‘just’ friendship was introduced as a means of avoiding discussing the existence of a sexual relationship. The more the suspect attempts to minimise the act, the more the paedophile and child are portrayed as more than ‘just good friends’. The suspect minimises the offence using a euphemistic ‘anything’ to denote sexual contact and avoids agency by suggesting mutuality, ‘we could go on, n-n-not bother about anything’. However, in an effort to downplay the contact as occasional, the suspect implies that sometimes they could bother about ‘anything’. The previous justification succeeds in incriminating the suspect as he explains how the child and himself are ‘just good friends’ because they occasionally have sexual contact.

The police interviewer avoids directly asking the suspect about physical contact, yet the suspect provides, with considerable conversational difficulty, a description of a sexual encounter. It is a non-sexual account and the suspect’s role in the instigation of sexual activity is confined to a casual, non-threatening, ‘how’dya feel?’. A sexual invitation is reformulated as an enquiry regarding the emotional state of the child. The responsibility is placed solely with the seemingly willing victim in agreeing to the act, ‘she said oh yeah’. Direct quotation in the guise of verbatim recall or ‘active voicing’ is commonly used to construct an account as factual and create an impression of perceptual re-experience (Edwards and Potter, 1992, Wooffitt, 1992). The complex disclaimer, ‘I’m not saying this as any disrespect towards Lucy’ can be perceived as an attempt to absolve himself from the act of disrespecting his victim. This is followed by a significant repair in lines 235-236 where the child ‘quite enjoyed being uh the little
sessions'. The utterance 'she quite enjoyed being' may have implied that the victim was responding to the actions of the suspect, whilst 'little sessions' is agency-neutralised and suggests mutual participation. The sexual act is admitted by implication as the euphemistic 'little session' and the only detailed actions are attributed to the victim. As with the 'anything' of line 232, the suspect formulates a minimised and playful event with no sexual discourse. The conversational exchange in lines 223-236 could have occurred between any individuals embarking on a mature, romantic relationship. The episode represents a normalised account of flattery in response to the attentions of a younger female, however, in line 230 the suspect contradicts the description he was attempting to construct by claiming that they were 'just good friends'. This is an inappropriate expression considering the age of the female and the progression of the narrative; friendship would not induce feelings of flattery. In addition, the utilisation of the child-like 'little sessions' to denote sexual activity in line 236 disrupts the normalised narrative of a mature, romantic relationship.

The interviewer's utterance in line 237 represents a 'switch' from the officer's emotional repertoire use to the more characteristic physical repertoire, reformulating the contact between the paedophile and the child as sexual, from 'little sessions' to 'sexual sessions'. The police interviewer treats the suspect's terminology as unsatisfactory, employing the first physical repertoire term of the interview to confirm the sexual nature of the relationship. The use of 'you mean' indicates the intention of the police interviewer to reformulate the previous utterance, rather than 'do you mean' which would invite the suspect to deny the physical contact. This technique of 'restatement with repair' is common in legal discourse (Atkinson and Drew, 1979). It is a form of clarification, retaining features of the original account whilst imposing new agenda. The claim 'you mean the sexual sessions' is also a rhetorical device for recruiting the record (Antaki and Leudar, 2001) and can be likened to the utterance 'this was about three years ago you say' in line 122 of extract 1. For the benefit of the audiotaped interview, this attributes bodily detail to the discourse of the suspect and diminishes the interviewer's interest in depicting the physical nature of the relationship between the paedophile and the child. In line 237, the suspect interrupts the switch of repertoires and attempts to manage the dilemma of excusing his own behaviour and blaming the victim by claiming that her 'enjoyment'
was no justification for his role in situation. The suspect must construct the account so it will be heard as coming from a sincere, rational individual who is aware of the law, ‘it’s no excuse and I know it shouldn’t have happened’. However, the sexual aspect of the question is ignored and he once again fails to provide detail in the euphemistic ‘what I did’ and ‘it shouldn’t have happened’. The fact that the suspect is not denying the reformulation of the police interviewer indicates that he is implicitly accepting the interpretation.

To summarise, in the previous extracts the suspect has constructed two vivid descriptions of the victim, each attending to the notion of accountability. ‘Bright little kid’ is an appropriate descriptions of a child by an adult employing ‘safe’ discourse and emotional repertoire terms to describe an attachment of innocence and feelings. In the first extract of the unfolding narrative, the victim expresses curiosity in the presence of pornographic material inadvertently revealed by the suspect, however, the offending behaviour is constructed as the ambiguous ‘it developed from there’. In ‘just good friends’, the suspect employs emotional repertoire terms to reformulate the sexual activity as a consequence of the enjoyment and willingness of the victim. The bodily aspect of the relationship is confirmed in the police interviewer’s switch from the emotional to the physical repertoire in the reformulation of ‘it’ and ‘little sessions’ as ‘sexual sessions’. As the narrative brings us closer to the time of arrest, the paedophile must carefully manage his descriptions of the victim. The 52-year-old suspected paedophile must explain how he came to be arrested for acts of gross indecency with a child. Subsequently, he is faced with the dilemma of whether to assume responsibility for his actions and depict the 9-year-old child as a victim or refute the nature of the allegations and construct her as an agentic sexual partner.

‘The first young lady that’s ever expressed an interest in me’

Extract 3 - Interview 1

363 DC: What made you feel okay about showing them to a
364 [eleven year old girl]
365 Susp: [accidently ] she first saw them when
366 I opened my boot one day I forgot they were
367 there and then she (1.8) °expressed an interest
368 in them and like looking at them and that’s how
369 it developed °
DC: So you felt confident about showing them to (.
Lucy whereas you wouldn’t have shown them to
[your wife ].
Susp: [yeah I was] I was (3.8) s:::exually (0.8) umm
(4.0) unconfident anymore about sex and Lucy
showing an interest in me and that was
flattering in itself and .hhh cos there was no
sexual relationships with my wife.
DC: Was it easier to feel confident with Lucy
because she was so young? <And you were an
adult and [more in control.>]
Susp: [no it’s just that] >it was the first
.hhh first young lady that’s ever expressed an
interest in me during my troubled (. ) marriage
over the past three years< (. ) °I said°.

The final episode in this analysis commences with the police officer readdressing the
youthful status of the victim in line 363, ‘What made you feel okay about showing
them to a eleven year old girl’. The police interviewer’s reference to age is in direct
contrast with the suspect’s previous attempts to portray the child as mature, intelligent
and agentic. The use of the term ‘girl’, as opposed to ‘female’ or ‘woman’, implies
pre-pubescence and a lack of sexual development. The utterance attends to the
criminal aspect of the sexual activity and can be likened to the police officer’s
previous formulation of the victim in line 223 of extract 2, ‘what you saw as the
attentions of a much younger () person’. The expression ‘showing them to a eleven
year old girl’ acknowledges the suspect’s responsibility for the viewing of the
pornographic magazines. The softer, euphemistic ‘them’ is the only expression
employed by the police officer in this episode more commonly associated with the
repertoire of the suspected paedophile. The age disparity is further reinforced in lines
378-380, ‘Was it easier to feel confident with Lucy because she was so young?’ . The
descriptive transition from ‘much younger person’ in extract 2 to ‘eleven year old
girl’ and ‘she was so young’ in extract 3 serves to further emphasise the immaturity
and youth of the victim. The distinct use of comparison in ‘you were an adult and
more in control’ attends to the liability of the suspect and the fact that the victim was
not an adult.

The suspect interrupts the police officer in line 365 to provide an account of why he
considered it acceptable to show pornographic material to a child. The incident is
characterised as ‘accidental’ and not the fault of the suspect, reminiscent of the
‘inadvertent’ manifestation of pornographic material in lines 126-128 of extract 1. Despite the agency implied by the interviewing officer’s initial question, ‘What made you feel okay about showing them’, the suspect avoids commencing his narrative with ‘I first showed her…’ opting for ‘she first saw them…’ suggesting increased victim accountability. This can be compared to the expression ‘she picked up on’ (line 126, extract 1), which positions the victim as an active agent and distances the suspect from the situation. In addition, the suspect describes the occasion when the victim first saw the magazines, suggesting further experiences with the pornographic material. The utterance ‘I opened my boot one day’, almost identical to ‘I opened my car b-uh-boot one day’ (lines 126-127, extract 1), serves to ground the account in normality and implies that there was nothing special about this particular day. The commonplace ‘I opened my car boot one day…’ is a discursive device for the production of ordinariness (Wooffitt, 1992) and enables the suspect to distance his actions and intentions from the criminal consequences. The expression ‘I forgot they were there’ also lends support for the unintended nature of the events.

In response to the questions, ‘take me through that relationship, how did it develop’ (extract 1) and ‘what made you feel okay about showing them’ (extract 3), the suspect provides an account of the child’s enthusiasm and inquisitiveness. In extract 1, the claims that she ‘was very interested in them and curious’ and ‘expressed an interest in them and like looking at them’ are used as explanations for both the physical development and the suspect’s acceptance of the relationship. In extract 3, once again the suspect characterises the child as pivotal in the instigation of sexual activity, ‘she° . hhh very interested’ and ‘she (1.8) °expressed an interest’ and ‘that’s how it developed’, comparable to ‘then it developed from there’ (line 133, extract 1). There is no mention of the accountability of the suspect due to the externalisation of agency and victim-blame. It is interesting to note that, despite the fact that the detective constable has invited the suspect to describe his internalised state in ‘what made you feel okay about showing them’, the response is completely devoid of emotion. The utterance does not commence with ‘I felt okay about showing them because…’ as this would have succeeded in drawing the suspect into the narrative. By describing the behaviours of the child, the suspect is detracting from his own actions and intentions. The account, ‘she first saw them when I opened my boot one day I forgot they were
there and then she (1.8) expressed an interest in them and like looking at them and that’s how it developed’, is entirely non-sexual, non-criminal and could have been describing a range of innocuous activities. The repeated use of ‘them’ to denote pornographic magazines and ‘it’ for the progression of sexual activity is also ambiguous and normalised.

The preceding account of the incident that inspired the suspect to feel ‘okay’ about showing pornography to the child can be perceived as an appropriate response to the questioning of the detective constable. However, the interviewer readdresses the notion of feelings and seeks further clarification in line 370-371, ‘So you felt confident about showing them to (.) Lucy’. The reformulation instructs the suspect to reconsider his motives, ‘you felt confident about showing them’, and is akin to the preceding ‘you mean the sexual sessions’ (line 237, extract 2). This technique of ‘restatement with repair’, common in police interrogations, retains features of the suspect’s original account whilst imposing new agenda (Atkinson and Drew, 1979). The interviewer succeeds in redefining the suspect’s role in the criminal activity, attributing it to the emotional intent of the suspect rather than the curiosity and eagerness of the child. The police officer employs an effective comparison in ‘you wouldn’t have shown them to your wife’. The use of the term ‘wife’, as opposed to ‘Carol’ or ‘an older woman’, enables the police officer to activate a particular membership category with a range of associated category-bound entitlements and obligations (Potter, 1996, Watson, 1984). The membership category is used to accentuate the disparity between the suspect’s two sexual partners, his wife and his victim. The suspect’s wife is the appropriate sexual partner of the suspect, more mature, experienced and familiar with the trappings of an adult relationship. In contrast, the victim is a 9-year-old child, immature, vulnerable and undeniably an inappropriate sexual partner for the suspect.

By utilising the term ‘wife’, the police officer also attributes the membership category ‘husband’ and its associated entitlements and behaviours to the suspect. Membership categories are resources that can be worked up to make accusations. For example, if a member of a given category does not enact category-bound obligations, in this case, a husband displaying both sexual attraction and loyalty to his wife, these matters may be
accountable (Watson, 1984). As the suspect sought sexual gratification from a 9-year-old female neighbour, an individual who was not his typical sexual partner, he must account for his activities. It is apparent that in this episode there is an absence of the sexual discourse commonly attributed to the police interviewer, the reformulated ‘sexual sessions’ (line 237, extract 2) and the implied flattery of the ‘attentions of a much younger person’ (line 224, extract 2). However, the discourse of the police officer lacks the minimisation and normalisation previously used to encourage the elaboration of the suspect’s narrative, for example ‘w-what were your feelings towards Lucy’ (line 117, extract 1) ‘take me through that relationship, how did it develop’ (line 123-124, extract 1) and ‘how did you view your relationship’ (line 228-229, extract 2). In this extract, the police interviewer employs discourse which addresses the suspect’s accountability and the dynamics of the physical relationship between the adult and the child, ‘what made you feel okay about showing them to a eleven year old girl’ and ‘she was so young...you were an adult and more in control’.

The suspect interrupts the police officer in line 373 to agree with the reformulation, ‘so you felt confident about showing them to (. ) Lucy’ and provide justification for his activities. The suspect accepts that he felt confident, however he subsequently *inverts* the expression to portray himself as vulnerable and insecure, ‘yeah I was I was (3.8) s:::exually (0.8) umm (4.0) unconfident’. Once again, the suspect endeavours to diminish his accountability by claiming that his lack of confidence was why he felt ‘flattered by the attentions of a much younger person’ and proceeded to engage in paedophilic activity. The only reference to physical repertoire terminology by the suspect, in this case ‘sexually’, ‘sex’ and ‘sexual’, is marred by conversation difficulty in the form of hesitant speech and prolonged pauses. It is also fascinating to note that the sexual discourse is only associated with his adult relationship, ‘there was no sexual relationships with my wife’. When describing the victim, the suspect employs relationship discourse and euphemisms, ‘Lucy showing an interest in me...that was flattering in itself’. The utterance serves to differentiate the adults in the narrative, the suspect and his wife, from the victim, and demonstrates how the emotional repertoire can actually create difficulty for the suspect. The adults are depicted as sharing increased commonalities as mature, experienced, sexual beings. This provides a contrast with the 9-year-old child, desexualised, immature and far-removed from the qualities of the typical sexual partner. In lines 375-377, the suspect
once again attempts to diminish his accountability and externalise his motives, 'that was flattering in itself and .hhh cos there was no sexual relationships with my wife'. The interpretative framework of the paedophile permits the offender to excuse their offending behaviour. Perpetrators of child sexual abuse often minimise their offending by citing problematic adult sexual relationships, family break-up, unemployment and pressures at work as excuses for their paedophilic tendencies (Howitt, 1995).

In line 381, the suspect interrupts the police officer during the question, 'was it easier to feel confident with Lucy because she was so young? <And you were an adult and more in control'. The significant use of the comparison 'she was so young? <And you were an adult' attends to the liability of the suspect and emphasises the immaturity of the victim, differentiating her from the adults in the account. The use of 'young' vs. 'adult' rather than 'young' vs. 'old' activates a membership categorisation device in the term 'adult', denoting particular responsibilities and obligations not suggested by the description 'old'. The suspect interrupts the police interviewer prior to the completion of his turn, 'no it's just that >it was the first .hhh first young lady that's ever expressed an interest in me'. This could have been due to the presence of a 'transitional relevance place' (Sacks et al, 1978, cited in Nofsinger, 1991) or the suspect hastening to disagree. It can be assumed that, due to the positioning of the overlap, the suspect has not acknowledged the second part of the question 'more in control', therefore it is likely that the suspect is addressing the issue of age disparity, ' because she was so young? <And you were an adult'. The suspect has agreed with the premise that he felt confident in the presence of the child, however, he now claims that the confidence was not a consequence of the youth of the victim.

The suspect's final description of the victim, 'the first young lady that's ever expressed an interest in me', represents a dramatic switch from previous characterisations. These characteristics include descriptions constructed by the police interviewer, 'a much younger () person', 'eleven year old girl' and 'she was so young', and those devised by the suspect himself, 'bright little kid' and 'just good friends'. Following a plethora of excuses for his offending behaviour, including the perceived enthusiasm of the alleged victim, his lack of sexual confidence and the absence of sexual contact in his marriage, the suspect justifies his offending as a
consequence of the arrival of a precocious, interested female. The victim as a 'young lady' is portrayed as flattering and seductive, giving the vulnerable suspect confidence and ultimately the 'okay' to instigate sexual activity. The final utterance of the episode, 'during my troubled marriage over the past three years', attempts to excuse the entire three-year offending period and can be likened to lines 376-377, 'there was no sexual relationships with my wife'. The suspect once again attempts to diminish his accountability, externalise his motives and minimise his offending by attributing blame to a lack of sexual activity with his spouse (Howitt, 1995).

**Concluding remarks**

In this particular case study, the police officer surrenders the floor to the suspect using emotional discourse and open questioning, 'w-what were your feelings towards Lucy' (line 117, extract 1) and 'how did you view your relationship, with Lucy' (lines 228-229, extract 2). The suspect, encouraged to tell his own story, recounts an elaborate emotional history employing victim-blame and minimisation, 's-she° .hhh very interested in them and curious' (lines 128-129, extract 1) and 'she (. ) quite enjoyed being uh the little sessions' (lines 235-236, extract 2). The suspect, permitted to formulate his own self-serving narrative, characterises the victim using inappropriate descriptions, 'just good friends' (line 230, extract 2) and 'first young lady that's ever expressed an interest in me' (lines 381-383, extract 3). The police officer then reformulates the suspect's account, switching to the physical repertoire to clarify detail and address accountability, 'Right you mean the sexual sessions' (line 237, extract 2) and 'because she was so young? <And you were an adult and more in control' (lines 379-380, extract 3). This enables the police officer to elicit a compromising disclosure from the suspect, 'that's no excuse for what I did...I know (. ) it shouldn't have happened' (lines 238-241, extract 2). It is apparent that the police officer has cultivated a specific interviewing technique which 'opens up' the interview to the suspect and encourages admission.
CHAPTER 8

WHEN THE POLICE OFFICER 'TELLS THE STORY':
REINTRODUCING THE SEXUAL AND CRIMINAL NATURE OF THE RELATIONSHIP

The previous chapter explored the implications of an 'open' style of interviewing by the police officer which encouraged the suspect to recount an elaborate, self-serving narrative with the use of open questioning and emotional discourse. The inappropriate descriptions of the relationship and the victim were then reformulated by the police officer with the use of bodily terminology to clarify detail and secure admission. This chapter presents a different style of police interviewing characterised by a version of events constructed solely by the police officer, characterised by sexual, bodily discourse and the minimisation of suspect intervention. It will be fascinating to explore the rhetorical implications of this type of interviewing for securing incriminating disclosures from the suspect.

Extract 1 - Interview 2

10 DC:  Bob (. ) d-do you understand why you’ve been
11 arrested?
12 Susp: Yes.
13 DC:  Okay, you’ve been arrested on suspicion of
14 indecently assaulting Sarah .hhhh
15 Susp: Mmm.
16 (2.6)
17 DC:  What Sarah does describe is that umm (. ) she
18 would regularly go into your house ummm (3.2)
19 quite unexpectedly sometimes ummm (4.1) she
20 talks about going into your front room and she
21 describes yourself sitting on a chair ummm and
22 she says you were masturbating y-yourself (2.8)
23 you would be watching pornographic videos umm
24 (. ) she describes them as quite explicit ummm
25 (1.4) animal-sort of animals were involved in
26 one or two of the videos she’s described as
27 well,
28 Susp: Never had an animal video=
29 DC:  =Haven’t you (2.4) you’ve already said at-at-at
the beginning that you, you’ve already agreed
that you did show her at some point,
Susp: Absolutely, [yeah I-I’d]
DC: [Sarah ] a video so (2.0)
that’s not in dispute is it but sa-she’s
describing that fact that you’ve been
masturbating yourself when she walked into the
room .hhhh ummm (.) and she also describes the
fact that you wouldn’t try and hide it >you
would continue this-this act in her presence
basically< .hhh ummmm she says you’d make no
attempt to try and hide it and your erect penis
was clearly visible, he wouldn’t stop what he
was doing he’d just carry on masturbating ummm,
she didn’t know what to do at the time, umm,
she would freeze an-and leave shortly
afterwards, .hnhhh she goes onto talk about
this ummm .hnhh this would happen on a regular-
regular uh it would happen regularly and on
several occasions she would walk into the room
.hhh uh you would say to her it’s only you and
then you would carry on masturbating, as if
it’s not a problem, it’s one of the girls,
Susp: Mmm.
DC: It ain’t not a problem, I’ll carry on, ummm she
can’t remember the exact reasons why she would
visit you in your house but (. ) she describes
it-is-is as an open house and she would visit
you-you on a regular regular times. Ummm (. )
she also describes that (. ) you would try and
expla-explain your actions by .hnhhh stating
to her >and she remembers the conversations
that you would explain to her< that people
think it’s dirty but it’s only natural .hnhh
ummm and you would explain to her that th-what
was happening on the video or the videos was
normal .hnhh and that’s what people do, that’s-
that’s normal. what can you say about that (. )
.hnhhh I mean that’s a that’s a fairly sort of
comprehensive picture that,

Before exploring the implications of this different style of police interviewing on
suspect testimony, it is beneficial to ascertain who exactly is providing the account of
the offence and how they tell the story, by examining the dynamics of the interview.
It is interesting to note that, in the interview 1 extracts analysed in the previous
chapter, the detective constable speaks for 17 lines (38%) and the suspect for 28 lines
(62%). In the interview 2 extracts, the detective constable speaks for 102 lines (71%)
and the suspect for 41 lines (29%). Therefore, the police officer in interview 2 is essentially saying *more* than the suspect in the discursive interaction. This chapter will now explore how the police officer manages to assume the role of primarily interlocutor and hold the floor, compared with the police officer in interview 1 who encouraged the suspect to recount an elaborate emotional narrative.

The detective constable introduces the details of the offence suddenly and without preface. Extract 1 represents the first line of enquiry with regard to the relationship between the suspect and the alleged victim. The extract is preceded by police interview preliminaries such as introductions and the location, date and time of the interview. There are no physical or emotional repertoire terms spoken by the police officer or the suspect in the first nine lines of the interview. In interview 1, the first mention of the relationship between the suspect and the alleged victim occurs in line 106, following the same interview preliminaries. However, prior to this, the police interviewer invites the suspect to provide a summary of his adult romantic relationships using the emotional terms ‘close’ and ‘friendship’. This demonstrates the swiftness with which the police officer in interview 2 introduces the criminal agenda for discussion and limits the opportunities for the suspect to provide his own account of the events leading to his arrest.

The interviewer asks whether the suspect understands the conditions of his arrest in the only question in the entire 69 lines of the extract, ‘Bob (. ) d-do you understand why you’ve been arrested?’ The police interviewer has asked a closed question which limits responses to a certain unit length, namely, a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ from the suspect. The suspect uses the acknowledgment token ‘mmm’ argued to be an *agreement*, accepting the previous utterance as adequate and suitably informative (Nofsinger, 1991), or a *continuer*, used strategically to encourage the other speaker to elaborate (Houtkoop-Steenstra, 2000). Therefore, the ‘mmm’ in line 15 is either depicting the suspect’s acceptance of the conditions of his arrest, in other words ‘I understand why I have been arrested’ or request for elaboration, ‘I’d like to hear more’ or ‘go on’ (Jefferson, 1993). It is impossible to ascertain what the suspect is implying by the use of ‘mmm’, although the suspect does not indicate, and the interviewer does not treat the utterance as indicating, a lack of understanding concerning the reasons for his arrest.
When this is compared to the police officer’s first line of enquiry in interview 1, ‘w-what were your feelings towards Lucy’ (line 117, extract 1), the open-ended invitation for the suspect to tell the story avoids specifying an agenda and permits the suspect to define of the relationship between himself and the child. The police officer utilises emotional repertoire questioning, enabling the suspect to define his feelings towards the victim in a minimised account with no interruption. The suspect provides an innocuous non-criminal and non-sexual description of the child, ‘Bright little kid...somebody who’s interested in wildlife and I started showing her the wildlife’ (lines 119-121, extract 1), imbuing her with curiosity and intelligence. Unlike interview 2, the suspect has not been restricted to simply confirming the physical details supplied by the interviewing officer.

The first line of questioning in interview 2 is prefaced with the softened use of the suspect’s first name ‘Bob’ but is then followed by a noticeable shift to a formal claim in lines 13-14, ‘Okay, you’ve been arrested on suspicion of indecently assaulting Sarah’. Rather than permit the suspect to formulate the interaction between himself and the child, the detective constable in interview 2 immediately defines the relationship as inappropriate and illegal. The use of ‘okay’ by the police officer to commence his turn is employed pivotally to attend to what was projected in the prior turn (the suspect’s acceptance of the conditions of his arrest) whilst paving the way for next-positioned matters (the police officer taking control of the unfolding narrative) (Beach, 1993). The utterance signifies that the suspect has accepted the matter and the police interviewer can proceed with the interview. The interviewer is both attributing understanding to his conversational opponent and locating the suspect’s agreement with the legal formulation on the official ‘record’ (Antaki and Leudar, 2001). This ensures that those who subsequently listen to the audiotape of the police interview acknowledge that the suspect does not dispute his understanding of his arrest.

In comparison, the first enquiry in interview 1 is followed by further open-ended questioning in line 123-125, ‘what-take me through that relationship, how did it develop to the point where (0.8) y’know, hhh (...) here today’. The ‘bright little kid’ account is treated as an appropriate start to the narrative in that the interviewer does not repeat the question or indicate dissatisfaction with the response. The police officer invites the suspect to provide further description of the ‘relationship’, drawing the suspect
further into the narrative and surrendering the floor. The interviewer avoids criminal and bodily discourse to describe the interaction between the suspected paedophile and the alleged victim, orienting to the relationship talk characteristic of the suspect. This form of questioning enables the suspect to construct an elaborate, self-serving account of innocuous friendship. The suspect describes the actions of the victim in such a way to minimise the seriousness of his own actions, strengthening his characterisation of Lucy as inquisitive and *agentic*, `s-she° .hhh very interested in them and *curious* etc’ (lines 128-129, extract 1).

In interview 2, the police officer does not invite the suspect to formulate his own account of the allegations but proceeds to outline the conditions of his arrest. The incidents culminating the indecent assault are described as the police interviewer embarks on 35 lines of almost uninterrupted narrative. The ‘okay’ in line 13 marks a *shift* from the direct questioning of the previous lines to a complete lack of questioning in the remainder of the extract. This introduces the police officer’s *control* over the ensuing narrative. In institutional talk, turn transitions are not locally managed but are pre-specified (Drew and Heritage, 1992). The investigative interview comprises asymmetric ‘question’ and ‘answer’ pairings where only the police officer has the right to ask questions and control the agenda of the interview. Subsequently, the police interviewer can manage the order and length of turns. Ten Have (1999) claimed that an interviewer constructs a long, multi-utterance turn until a recognisable question is produced. The fact that the detective constable in interview 2 only asks the suspect *one* direct question in the entire extract (lines 10-11) means that he can construct a long turn and assume the role of storyteller. The police officer must indicate to the suspect that an extended turn is underway in order for the other speaker to refrain from taking the floor at a legitimate transition-relevance place (TRP).

**Devices for holding the floor and managing turn transition**

Extract 2 - Interview 2

17 DC: What Sarah does describe is that *ummm* (. ) she
18 would regularly go into your house *ummm* *(3.2)*
19 quite unexpectedly sometimes *ummm* *(4.1)* she
20 talks about going into your front room and she
21 describes yourself sitting on a chair *ummm* and
22 she says you were masturbating *y-yourself* *(2.8)*
you would be watching pornographic videos umm (. ) she describes them as quite explicit ummm

It is fascinating to observe how the police officer maintains control of the narrative despite the frequency and length of his hesitations. The use of fillers such as ‘er’, ‘uh’, ‘ah’ and ‘ummm’, delaying devices enabling the police interviewer to hold the floor whilst thinking of what next to say (Drew and Heritage, 1992). The police officer uses fillers habitually in the previous extract, indicated in bold type. When ‘ummm’ is accompanied by a prolonged pause, the police officer is indicating that he has not finished, there is more to come after the pause and the suspect has not been invited to commence his turn. The suspect cannot interpret the end of a clause as a TRP due to the absence of falling (‘full-stop’) or rising (‘questioning’) intonation. The police interviewer also holds the floor by pausing in the middle of a clause, ‘that umm (. ) she’ (line 17, extract 2). The utterance is grammatically incomplete and the suspect is less likely to detect a relevant TRP.

Extract 3 - Interview 2

46 afterwards, .hhhhhh she goes onto talk about
47 this ummm .hhhh this would happen on a regular-
48 regular uh it would happen regularly and on
49 several occasions she would walk into the room
50 .hhh uh you would say to her it’s only you and

An audible in-breath is a vocal indication that its producer is about to speak (Drew and Heritage, 1992, Hutchby and Wooffitt, 1998, Houtkoop-Steenstra, 2000). In order to keep the floor, the police officer also takes breaths in the middle of a clause, rather than at the end to signify that he has not yet finished (line 47, extract 3). The police officer also stretches sounds at the boundary of a TRP, for example ‘ummmm’ (line 40, extract 4). The ‘ummmm’ has communicative meaning, indicating to the suspect that the turn has not yet finished. Once again, there is no audible completion point or invitation for the suspect to talk.

Extract 4 - Interview 2

38 fact that you wouldn’t try and hide it >you
39 would continue this-this act in her presence
40 basically< .hhh ummmm she says you’d make no
41 attempt to try and hide it and your erect penis
The use of ‘continuing intonation’ (indicated by the use of a comma in lines 51-52, extract 5), which may or may not occur at the end of a turn constructional unit, mimics the enunciation of an item in a not yet completed list (Hutchby and Wooffitt, 1998). The detective constable is never quite finished and subsequently prevents turn transition. The interviewer also avoids rising intonation and tag questions (e.g. ‘then you would carry on masturbating, wouldn’t you?’), which would invite the suspect to respond to the allegation.

Extract 5 - Interview 2

50 . hhh uh you would say to her it’s only you and
51 then you would carry on masturbating, as if
52 it’s not a problem, it’s one of the girls,

Despite the frequency of discursive devices for maintaining possession of the conversational floor, the suspect finally contributes to the unfolding story in line 28 of extract 6. The suspect interrupts the police officer’s prolonged turn to refute that he has ever owned a pornographic video involving animals, whilst failing to acknowledge the more serious allegations of indecency. This could be due to the allegation of masturbating in the presence of a child being followed by ‘umm’ and a prolonged pause, indicating that the suspect had not been invited to commence his turn. This prosodic structure contrasts with the allegation of possessing animal pornography as lines 25-27 represent a complete clause ending with continuing intonation, mimicking the enunciation of a list comprising distinct items. The provision of a narrative by the police officer, devoid of questions or TRPs, also diminishes the need for the suspect to manage accountability.

Extract 6 - Interview 2

24 (. ) she describes them as quite explicit ummm
25 (1.4) animal-sort of animals were involved in
26 one or two of the videos she’s described as
27 well,
28 Susp: Never had an animal video=
29 DC: =Haven’t you (2.4) you’ve already said at-at-at
30 the beginning that you, you’ve already agreed
31 that you did show her at some point,
32 Susp: Absolutely, [yeah I-I’d]
33 DC: [Sarah ] a video so (2.0)
The denial of the suspect in line 28 is followed by the immediate 'latching on' of speech by the police interviewer. The interviewer appears to restate the question, 'Haven't you...'. However, what starts as a question, an invitation to the suspect to join the developing account, becomes reformulated as a statement, 'you've already said...you've already agreed that you did show her at some point'. The suspect has essentially been pushed out of the narrative and the details concerning the animal content of the pornographic material dismissed as irrelevant. The statement 'already said' becomes upgraded to 'already agreed', eliminating the need for the police officer to elicit further confirmation from the suspect. Rather than surrender the floor to the suspect for an unspecified turn-length, the police officer restricts any forthcoming responses to confirming or denying the reformulation.

The suspect perceives the utterance of the police officer as a question and emphatically admits to using pornographic material in the presence of a child in line 32. However, the suspect is once again interrupted mid-turn by the interviewing officer. It is evident that, having secured the required affirmation that he 'did show her at some point', the police officer can return to his story. Line 31, 'you did show her' is reformulated as 'Sarah a video' which is followed by a closed assertion masquerading as a question, 'that's not in dispute is it'. The tag question 'is it' at the end of the utterance would normally require a response from the addressed speaker, however, the suspect does not treat this utterance as an invitation to provide a 'yes' or 'no' response. If the response had been inaudible, for example a nod of confirmation, it did not warrant being located 'on the record' by the police officer. The police officer does not take this opportunity to ask the suspect how the child reacted to the pornography, what she said to the suspect during the incident or whether she enjoyed or feared the material. The detective constable fails to pursue both the potential self-incrimination and the sought-after admission of the suspect. This contrasts with interview 1, where the suspect admits to feeling flattered by what he perceives to be the physical attentions of his 9-year-old victim, 'of course I was fla(hh)ttered. (1.0) Very much so' (lines 226-227, extract 2). The emphatic 'of course' and 'very' normalise the relationship, however, by constructing an elaborate, self-serving
account the suspect gets into difficulty and must now negotiate the dilemma of conveying the potential reciprocation of these attentions. The police officer does not interrupt in interview 1 and attends to the suspect’s formulation of the interaction, ‘And how did yo::u, how did you view your relationship, with Lucy (. ) as it developed’ (lines 228-229, extract 2). The police interviewer minimises the physical contact between the perpetrator and the victim as a ‘relationship’, as opposed to the ‘indecent assault’ of interview 2, and maintains control of the narrative by skilfully integrating the suspect into the developing account.

Extract 7 - Interview 2

51 then you would carry on masturbating, as if,  
52 it’s not a problem, it’s one of the girls,  
53 Susp: Mmm.  
54 DC: It ain’t not a problem, I’ll carry on, ummm  
55 can’t remember the exact reasons why she would

There is a fascinating discursive interaction in lines 51-55 of the previous extract, which clearly demonstrates the police officer holding the floor and excluding the suspect from the narrative. The interviewer makes a claim about the rationalisation of the suspected paedophile, ‘then you would carry on masturbating, as if it’s not a problem, it’s one of the girls’. This formulation of the suspect’s reasoning during his offence would warrant either an explanation or correction from the suspect in the succeeding turn. However, rather than construct a denial such as ‘it didn’t happen’ or ‘I didn’t think that’, the suspect responds in line 53 with ‘Mmm’. The acknowledgement token ‘mmm’, as previously discussed, can function as an agreement (Nofsinger, 1991) or as a continuer (Houtkoop-Steenstra, 2000). Therefore, the ‘mmm’ in extract 9 is either depicting the suspect’s acceptance of the police interviewer’s formulation, ‘I carried on even though it was just one of the girls’ or request for elaboration, ‘I’d like to hear more’ (Jefferson, 1993). It is impossible to ascertain the precise use of ‘mmm’, although the suspect has not denied that he would continue to masturbate in the presence of his stepdaughter. What is more important is how the interviewer reacts to this utterance. The police officer proceeds with his account rather than seeking further evidence of the suspect’s agreement with the formulation.
The response ‘It ain’t not a problem, I’ll carry on’ in line 54 has two possible interpretations. What is in question is who is being referred to in the ‘I’ of ‘I’ll carry on’, the police officer or the suspected paedophile. If the utterance is spoken from the point of view of the police officer, in other words ‘I disagree, it IS a problem, I’ll continue with my story’, it represents the interviewer’s disapproval of the suspect’s justifications. However, if the utterance is ventriloquising the suspect, as in ‘I acknowledge the presence of the girl, but I’ll continue masturbating’, the direct reported speech enables the police officer to vocalise the suspect’s justifications for his offending.

The minute examination of the police officer’s intonation in lines 51-54 provides the answer. If line 54 represented the words of the police officer, the intonation, tone and rhythm would have been different from lines 51-52 as the detective constable recounted the narrative of the suspect. In addition, there would have been an emphasis on ‘ain’t’ in ‘it ain’t not a problem’ to suggest criticism. In actuality, the utterance represents the reported speech of the suspect, as the intonation, tone and rhythm remain the same throughout ‘then you would carry on masturbating† as if it’s not a problem† it’s one of the girls† it ain’t not a problem† I’ll carry on†’. It is interesting to note that the use of the second person in line 51, ‘you would carry on masturbating’ is substituted by the first person in line 54, ‘it ain’t not a problem, I’ll carry on’. The utterance ‘as if’ signals a shift from the narrative voice of the police officer to the ventriloquising of the suspect, ‘it’s not a problem, it’s one of the girls, it ain’t not a problem, I’ll carry on’. The continuing intonation, which mimics the enunciation of an item in a not yet completed list, subsequently hinders turn transition (Hutchby and Wooffit, 1998).

To reiterate, the police officer is vocalising the suspect’s justifications for his offence. With regards to the ‘mmm’ in line 53, it does not matter whether the suspect was indicating agreement with the police officer’s formulation or a request for further information, because the police officer is not treating the utterance as either. The interviewer, rather than challenge the self-incriminating admission of the suspect with further questions such as ‘so you agree?’ and ‘why did you think it was okay?’ has failed to pursue the response of the suspect and continued with his own story. This discursive interaction can be contrasted with lines 230-237 of interview 1. The
suspect is invited to take the floor and describes a normalised interaction between him and the child ‘Just good friends I mean hhh we could we could we could go on, n-n-not bother about anything...she (. ) quite enjoyed being uh the little sessions’. In an attempt to evade the physical component of the accusation, the suspect succeeds in describing a sexual encounter incorporating the cliché ‘just good friends’. Rather than ignore this self-incrimination, the police interviewer reformulates the suspect’s euphemistic ‘little sessions’ as ‘sexual sessions’, ensuring that both the physical nature of the contact between the paedophile and the child is ‘on the record’ and the information originated from the suspect.

The rhetorical effect of direct reported speech

In interview 1, the suspected paedophile is invited to assume the role of narrator and recount the relationship between himself and the alleged victim. In contrast, the alleged victim in interview 2 is constructed by the detective constable as the ‘storyteller’ from the onset of the narrative. The interviewer speaks on behalf of the victim in the third person, ‘What Sarah does describe is that umm (. ) she would regularly go into your house...she talks about going into your front room and she describes yourself sitting on a chair’ (lines 17-21). Whilst portraying the child as narrator, the detective constable also recounts details of indecency, ‘she says you were masturbating y-yourself (2.8) you would be watching pornographic videos’ (lines 22-23), ‘she’s describing that you’ve been masturbating yourself’ (lines 34-36) and ‘she says you’d make no attempt to try and hide it and your erect penis was clearly visible,’ (lines 40-42). The introduction of explicit expressions such as ‘masturbating’, ‘pornographic’ and ‘erect penis’, uncharacteristic of the speech of an 8-year-old child, indicates that the police officer may have reformulated the testimony of the victim to encompass preferred physical repertoire terminology. However, the suspect is not given the opportunity to acknowledge or challenge the use of bodily language by the ‘victim’.

It is fascinating to note the sudden change in narration from the police interviewer’s indirect reference to the victim’s statement ‘she says you’d make no attempt to try and hide it and your erect penis was clearly visible’, to the use of direct quotation, ‘he
wouldn't stop what he was doing he'd just carry on masturbating’ in lines 42-43. The police officer’s penchant for speaking on behalf of the victim is bolstered with direct reported speech to establish the factuality of a claim and achieve a sense of perceptual re-experience, “the speakers are designing certain utterances to be heard as if they were said at the time” (Wooffitt, 1992, p.161). The boundaries between the speech of the victim and the interviewing officer are blurred, introducing the issue of who has the right to such knowledge. The potential for suspect intervention is minimised, as he cannot legitimately express either approval or disapproval of claims about the perceptions of non-present third party.

In lines 50-54, the police officer utilises the alleged direct reported speech of the suspect to propose justifications for the paedophile’s acts of indecency, ‘it ain’t not a problem, I’ll carry on’. The suspect can legitimately pass judgement on the police officer’s formulation of his own cognitive reasoning and responds with ‘Mmm’, an acknowledgement token which functions as an acceptance of the police interviewer’s ventriloquising, ‘I carried on even though it was just one of the girls’. The detective constable once again speaks on behalf of the suspect in lines 62-67, ‘you would explain to her< that people think it’s dirty but it’s only natural...and that’s what people do, that’s-that’s normal’. The police officer makes a claim about the motives and rationalisations of the suspect, yet does not invite the suspect to comment on these formulations.

The suspect is excluded from the developing narrative by the police interviewer in the final lines of extract 1. The police officer appears to be inviting the suspect to comment on his previous formulations with the open-ended ‘what can you say about that’ in line 67. The utterance is reminiscent of the open-ended questioning of interview 1, for example, ‘how did you view your relationship’ (line 229, extract 2), which permits the suspect to take the floor and minimise his offences in a self-serving explanation. However, while ‘how did you view your relationship’ invites the suspect to specifically address his bond with the victim, ‘what can you say about that’ challenges the suspect to respond to a series of unspecified accusations constructed by the police officer. Following an in-breath to hold the floor, the police officer implies that he has provided a thorough version of events and that any attempt to develop the narrative would be inappropriate and unnecessary, ‘that’s a fairly sort of
comprehensive picture that'. In other words, the police interviewer is indicating 'I am inviting you to respond openly to the allegations but I'd just like to add that there is little point because I've told you everything'. The utterance resembles the previous pseudo-question, 'that's not in dispute is it' (line 34, extract 8), which the detective constable succeeds in both posing and answering with no intervention from the suspect. Rather than ending the account with a question and conceding the floor, the police officer's constructs the previous 35 lines of narrative as a 'comprehensive picture'. However, the account has only presented the criminal and sexual formulations of the police officer, with no input from the suspect. Despite the police officer's efforts to exclude the other speaker, the suspected paedophile responds to the allegations of indecency in line 70.

Extract 8 - Interview 2

70  Susp: I-I hhhhhh well the first thing I would say was
71    that if I was (2.8) lying on or sitting in a
72    chair masturbating and I heard my door go the
73    first thing I would do is cover up. Because I
74    wouldn't know who it was. (1.6) That's the
75    first thing I would say.
76  DC: Mmm (.) and wh[at ab]
77  Susp: [And I] would certainly wouldn't
78     I wou=
79  DC: =If they've got keys to come in (.) an-and I
80     sort of=
81  Susp: =W-well I w- I certainly wouldn't keep doing
82     it!
83  DC: (coughs) hhhhhh but she says you do and tha-
84     that's what the whole (.) that's what she's
85     saying uhhh sh-she recalled a number of
86     occasions you would try and cover yourself up
87     .hhh because you're quite right in what you're
88     saying >you might not know who it is< but she
89     says soon as .hh you realised it was her then
90     you would carry on? .hhh ummm=
91  Susp: ="No." (.) I'm sorry no.
92  DC: So you've never .hhh masturbated yourself in
93     [front]
94  Susp: [But, ]
95  DC: of Sarah?
96  Susp: The only >the only< (.) person out of the four
97     hhhh females in that family .hhh that's seen
98     me with an erection is Brenda.
99  DC: Right. So in answer to my previous question
100  .hhhh what I'm saying t(hhh)o you is >have you
In line 70, the suspect responds to the police officer's elongated narrative by generating a hypothetical scenario, 'if I was (2.8) lying on or sitting in a chair masturbating and I heard my door go the first thing I would do is cover up'. The 'if-then' structure, for example 'if I was lying on or sitting in a chair masturbating and I heard my door go (then) the first thing I would do is cover up' blurs the distinction between what is actual and what is hypothetical (Potter, 1996). In interview 1, the suspect employs discursive devices to normalise an unusual event and construct ordinariness, for example, 'I opened my car boot one day...' (lines 126-127, extract 1). In this interview, rather than normalise the incident, the suspect is using the hypothetical to normalise the reaction of the actor in the incident. The use of 'would' (Edwards, 1997), as in 'the first thing I would do is cover up' (lines 72-73), 'I wouldn't know who it was' (lines 73-74) and 'W-well I w- I certainly wouldn't keep doing it!' (lines 81-82), suggests that the suspect is aware of predictable and acceptable reactions in these circumstances and is treating his reaction as warranting generalisation. By recognising that normal individuals would cover themselves if caught masturbating, the suspect is constructing himself as a normal individual and undermining the logic of the police officer's account and subsequently the account of the alleged victim. The suspect is arguing in terms of the logic of the situation, enabling him to avoid admitting or denying anything about his own actions. Therefore, rather than claiming 'the offence didn't happen because I was doing this...' the suspect is contesting the account with 'the allegation is implausible because the incident would not have happened'.

The police officer attempts to intervene in line 79, 'If they've got keys to come in (.) an-and I sort of'. The interviewer defends the logic of his own account and maintains the hypothetical with 'if they've got keys', rather than 'did they have keys?' which would have formulated an actual event and invited the suspect to rejoin the interaction. However, the suspect does not permit the detective constable to retain the floor by interrupting emphatically in line 77, 'And I would certainly wouldn't...well I w-I certainly wouldn't keep doing it!' The suspect draws attention to the internal coherence of the police officer's account that describes something in which he
'certainly' would not participate. The suspect once again avoids admitting or denying any of the allegations by depicting an account of normal, typical behaviour. It is fascinating to note that, in line 83, the police officer switches from using hypothetical reasoning to an account of the actual, 'but she says you do and tha-that's what the whole (.) that's what she's saying'. Rather than devise a theoretical account typical of the suspect, 'if she said you did', the police officer reports the observed, tangible actions of the suspect during the offence. The police officer's switch from the hypothetical to the actual terminates the suspect's 'logic' argument as if 'well it happened whether you think it's implausible or not'.

The police officer briefly addresses the formulation of the suspect in lines 85-86, 'sh-she recalled a number of occasions you would try and cover yourself up'. The police officer accepts the suspect's hypothetical account of the incident as reasonable in terms of the logic of the story, 'you're quite right in what you're saying >you might not know who it is'. However, rather than pursue the suspect's construction of the scenario with the probing questioning style examined in interview 1 such as 'what would you have used to cover yourself up?' and 'if she had seen anything...' the police officer does not attempt to flesh out the suspect's response and recreate the scene. At the culmination of the detective constable's turn in lines 88-90, the narrative is once again constructed as an account of the actual, rather than of the hypothetical, 'but she says soon as hh you realised it was her then you would carry on'. The provision of a narrative by the police officer diminishes the need for the suspect to negotiate his accountability. The utterance does not require more than a minimal response, justifying the suspect's outright denial in line 91.

Despite the denial, the police officer introduces a series of direct questions reformulating the previous allegation in line 92, 'So you've never .hhh masturbated yourself in front of Sarah?' This is the first utterance in the entire extract to explicitly ask the suspect whether he committed indecency in the presence of the victim. The opening of the turn, 'So', like 'therefore' and 'consequently', reformulates the suspect's hypothetical narrative into an account of the actual, attending to the claim that he did not masturbate in the presence of the alleged victim. The utterance also reformulates the contact between the paedophile and the child as sexual, from 'I certainly wouldn't keep doing it!' to 'So you've never .hhh masturbated yourself in
front of Sarah?' In interview 1, the police officer switches from using the emotional to the physical repertoire to reformulate 'little sessions' to 'you mean the-the sexual sessions' (line 237, extract 2). The suspect is encouraged to manage the dilemma of excusing his own behaviour and blaming the victim. In contrast, 'So you've never' presupposes a negative response and succeeds in closing the narrative down, providing the suspect with no invitation to elaborate. Subsequently, the suspect responds in line 96 without explicitly answering the question, 'The only >the only< (. ) person out of the four hhhh females in that family .hhhh that's seen me with an erection is Brenda'.

It is interesting to note that, although the suspect has been accused of gross indecency, at no stage in the interview has the police officer invited the suspect to provide any background information regarding his relationship with the alleged victim. This is due to the significant absence of questions, such as 'tell me about Sarah' or 'how is your relationship with Sarah?' commonly associated with the style of interviewing employed in interview 1. The detective constable could have pursued the ambiguous response in line 96 with an invitation to elaborate, for example, 'has she ever seen you masturbate without an erection?' However, the police officer in interview 2 retains the floor and avoids recreating the scene.

In line 99, the reiterated 'So' commences the reformulation 'have you ever masturbated in front of Sarah', almost a direct restatement of the previous question, 'So you've never .hhh masturbated yourself in front of Sarah'. Despite treating the suspect's previous turn as acceptable, 'Right', the police officer constructs lines 96-98 as not providing the appropriate information by explicitly referring to his prior turn, 'in answer to my previous question'. As extract 1 documents the physical and criminal details of the offence, extract 2 seeks to establish the suspect's agreement or disagreement with the given story. The police officer does not seek a response from the suspect beyond 'this is what happened, do you agree?' The question is formulated as a means of placing the suspect's unambiguous denial 'on the record'. There is no pressure for the suspected paedophile to provide an explanation or tell his side of the story. This style of questioning subsequently leads to the denial in line 102.
Concluding remarks

In this case study, the police officer narrates an explicit sexual history, often under the guise of the 'victim', 'she's describing that fact that you've been masturbating yourself' (lines 34-36, extract 1) and 'she says...your erect penis was clearly visible' (lines 40-42, extract 1). The police officer takes control of the story, employing linguistic devices such as fillers, manipulated clauses, the absence of transitional relevance places, in-breaths and continuing intonation to hold the floor. When attempting to respond to the accusations, the suspect is pushed out of unfolding narrative, 'that's not in dispute is it' (line 34, extract 1) and 'you've already agreed that you did show her at some point' (lines 30-31, extract 1). The police officer limits the suspect's turns to confirming specific bodily details, 'So you've never .hhh masturbated yourself in front...of Sarah?' (lines 92-95, extract 8). This enables the suspect to refute the allegations with a simple denial. By acting as narrator of a graphic, criminal account, the detective constable provides no opportunity for the suspected paedophile to generate his own self-serving version of events. Unable to switch repertoires or reformulate the suspect's inappropriate descriptions, the police officer 'closes down' the interview and permits the suspect to deny the allegations.
The previous discourse analysis identified two distinct styles of police interviewing with implications for admission and denial in suspected paedophiles. These two styles of interviewing comprise ‘open’ interviewing, identified in Chapter 7, where the police officer employs relationship talk and innocuous questioning to encourage the suspect to recount a mitigating narrative. The suspect’s narrative is then reformulated by the police officer who switches to the use of bodily terminology to confirm the occurrence of a sexual and criminal act. On the other hand, ‘closed’ interviewing, outlined in Chapter 8, is characterised by the police officer holding the floor, minimising suspect intervention and constructing an explicit, agentic, bodily description which permits the suspect to deny the police officer’s version of events. This chapter will examine further episodes to establish whether these two styles of interviewing are evident in the remaining nine police-paedophile interviews.

‘Open’ interviewing

The opening question

Extract 1- Interview 1

228 DC:  How did you view your relationship, with Lucy (.) [as it developed. ]

Extract 2 - Interview 3

27 DC:  Do you wanna tell me about (1.4) w-a-about what happened with Sam then?

Extract 3 - Interview 4a

35 DC:  Can you tell us about Emily then.

Extract 4 - Interview 4b
124 DC: Do you want to tell us about Danielle?

Extract 5 - Interview 5

71 DC: Could you tell me what happened with (2.4) Tom.

Extract 6 - Interview 6

13 DC: Tell me about (. ) Andrew then.

The absence of agenda and characterisation

There are six instances of ‘opening’ questions with generic features previously documented in Chapter 7. It is fascinating to note that all of the opening questions in the previous extracts evade the sexual and criminal components of the allegations of gross indecency and the making of child pornography (interview 1), buggery (interview 3) and indecent assault (interviews 3, 4a, 4b, 5 and 6). There is no mention of the bodily contact between the suspected paedophile and the child, ‘do you wanna tell me about when you touched Sam on the bottom’, or of the specific criminal activity, ‘tell me about the indecent assault’. The only agenda seems to be the use of emotional repertoire terminology directing the narrative towards ‘relationship’ talk. It can be argued that three of the opening questions, ‘how did you view your relationship with Lucy (. ) as it developed’ (interview 1), ‘what happened with Sam’ (interview 3) and ‘what happened with (2.4) Tom’ (interview 5), suggest that something occurred. The implications of assuming that something ‘happened’ with the children will be discussed further on.

The police officers also avoid characterising the alleged victims. The interviewers maintain informality by identifying the children by their first names, ‘Lucy’, ‘Sam’, ‘Emily’, ‘Danielle’, ‘Tom’ and ‘Andrew’ and avoid imposing labels which draw attention to either the youthful or maltreated status of the complainant, for example, ‘the little girl’ or ‘the victim’. The police officers construct innocent questions which could be inviting the suspected paedophile to describe any individual, not necessarily an underage victim of sexual abuse. The non-specific and non-threatening opening turns encourage the suspects to provide innocuous accounts of the alleged victims.
Grammatical structure
The opening questions by the police officers are minimal, an average of nine words per turn. All of the questions occur early in the interviews, an average of 120 lines into the transcriptions, and represent the first line of enquiry with regard to the relationship between the suspect and the alleged victim. The turns are only preceded by preliminary details such as introductions and the location, date and time of the interview. The 'tell me/us about' format of extracts 2-6 encourages the suspects to take the floor and set the agenda for discussion. The utterances 'how did you view your relationship' and 'tell me about(.) Andrew' are conventionally open-ended and encourage the suspects to construct potentially elongated explanations. These questions do not restrict the turn of the suspects to a 'yes' or 'no' response. The remainder commence with, 'do you wanna', 'can you', 'do you want to' and 'could you' and risk a minimal 'yes' or 'no' response from the suspects, for example, 'no, I don't want to tell you' or 'no, I can't tell you'. However, there is an absence of denial in the suspects' subsequent turns, 'I gave Tom a bath at my house, I don't deny that' (line 72, interview 5), and all of the police interviewers questions are treated as invitations to tell a story. The opening questions initiate the 'opening up' of the suspects' narratives.

The suspect's narrative

Extract 7 - Interview 3

29 Susp: =Sam was a very good games tester. He used to
do a lot of testing-games-testing .hnhhh ummm I
will admit I was attracted to Sam >I think Sam
was attracted to me we had a v::ery close
relationship with each other< .hnhhh but-n (1.6)
I was-f-f I tried to keep it as much as
possible at arms-arms length unti:::l (3.8)
.hnhh uhhhh (.) it then happened in eighty-
fo::ur I'm not. Quite. Sure. What. Date. The
event. Was. .hnhh in the first part of
>nineteen eighty four< m::y business started to
go certainly downhill and I started to >suffer
very badly from (. ) depression.< .hnhh ummmmm
an:::d (.) I became I used to go ab-about
every two weeks to:::o get the tablets. .hnhh
during this time it had got to the point
wher::e hnhh sometimes myself and Sam ss-.hnh
would be very close we would often kiss b-. hhh at that point I made it very clear that we weren't going any further.

All six of the suspects' responses, which immediately follow the opening questions, share a range of commonalities (for remaining five responses see Appendix 2, specifically lines 230-236 of interview 1, lines 36-53 of interview 4a, lines 125-132 of interview 4b, lines 72-83 of interview 5 and lines 14-58 of interview 6). The opening questions yield elaborate narrative explanations, an average of 145 words per response. Three of the opening questions (interviews 1, 3 and 5) imply that something 'happened' with the alleged victims and the subsequent responses immediately attend to mutual accountability and normalisation. The suspect and the child are portrayed as equally responsible and active partners in an ordinary, mature, sexual relationship, 'I will admit I was attracted to Sam >I think Sam was attracted to me we had a very close relationship with each other<' (lines 30-33, interview 3) and 'Just good friends I mean .hhh we could we could go on, n-n-not bother about anything then other times I said how'dya feel and she said oh yeah' (lines 230-233, interview 1). The responsibility is also shared with the mother of the alleged victim in an account of an incident described as both ordinary and acceptable, 'I gave Tom a bath at my house, I don't deny that. I told his mother that I'd given him a bath’ (lines 72-74, interview 5).

The remaining opening questions (interviews 4a, 4b and 6) avoid setting an agenda and invite the suspects to provide more 'general' descriptions of the victims using the 'tell me/us about' format. Each of the subsequent responses avoid the interaction between suspect and child yet immediately focus on the accountability of the victim as an active and available agent, 'She was a girl who often used to come to me' (lines 38-39, interview 4a), 'she used to come up to me (. ) just about every day and stand with me in the playground' (lines 127-129, interview 4b) and 'he was talking about going into this sort of nightclub he was talking about uhhhh drinking. >He was actually talking quite a bit about sex as well.< So I actually:::uhhh got the impression that he was about (3.4) .hhh about the uhhh late teens' (lines 15-20, interview 6).
The lack of police interference

The suspected paedophiles' prolonged responses endure no interruptions. The only examples of the interviewers speaking 'during' the suspects' narratives are demonstrated in lines 133 of interview 4b and 31 of interview 6:

Extract 8 - Interview 4b

129 playground or at the do:::or? An::d it took a
130 long while to nurture her onto other pupils >so
131 that she would play with other pupils< (.)
132 an::d not be with me all the time?
133 DC: °Right?°
134 Susp: Yes, because she was was running up to me so
135 often (. ) again we did develop a sort of
136 rapport .hhh ummm >very often in lesson times<

Extract 9 - Interview 6

27 nineteen ninety nine? Uhhh Andrew came round
28 one afternoon, ummmmm, he was, yeah it was
29 Saturday afternoon, he came back round. He was
30 wearing a singlet an:::d (. ) shorts.
31 DC: Mmm?
32 Susp: Mmmmm we'd gone up t:::o m:::::y room. Andrew
33 laid down on the bed .hhhh ummmmm I::::: laid
34 down next to him, sort of-sor-sor he was
35 cuddling we was kissing a bit .hhhh an:::d

Both of the police officers provide continuers, 'Right?' and 'Mmm?' (Nofsinger, 1991) which are minimal, avoid taking a full turn and, coupled with the rising intonation, invite the other speaker to elaborate. What is significant is that the suspects treat the utterances as encouragement to retain the floor and continue with their narratives. The continuers are non-evaluative and do not regard the narratives as inappropriate responses to the opening questions, either pushing the suspect out of the discursive interaction or instigating a new topic for discussion. The suspects' continue with affirmations, 'Mmmmm' and 'Yes', suggesting that they are treating the police officer's continuers as seeking confirmation of the preceding account. The suspects then resume their self-serving accounts.
The avoidance of victim and offence

The suspects employ the first names of the victims, disguising their youthful and mistreated status and maintaining the informality of the police officers' opening questions. Whilst striving to create a narrative in which the suspect could be describing an innocent relationship, there remains an awareness of illegality. However, the suspects avoid criminal and sexual language and there is considerable conversational difficulty when accounting for the unlawful aspects of their activities. This includes stuttered speech, ‘I tried to keep it as much as possible at arms-arms length’ (lines 34-35, interview 3) and ‘I thought it was too-y-too dangerous to have him around’ (lines 56-58, interview 6), prolonged hesitations, ‘I made it very clear that we weren’t going any::: (. ) further’ (lines 47-48, interview 3) and ‘I tried to::: make a distance between us’ (line 55, interview 6), audible in-breaths and fillers ‘he was about (3.4) .hhh’ about the uhhh late teens’ (lines 18-20, interview 6). The suspects also take responsibility for recognising the potential for misconduct and terminating the relationship, ‘I tried to’, ‘I made it very clear’, ‘I actually:::uhhh got the impression’ and ‘I thought it was too-y-too dangerous’.

Relationship talk and mitigation


Minimisation

The descriptions of the sexual and criminal acts between the suspect and the child are euphemistic and externalised. The utterance ‘it then happened’ (line 36, interview 3) utilises an ambiguous ‘it’ to denote indecent assault and buggery with a 12-year-old boy, and ‘happened’ to diminish the accountability of the suspect. The euphemistic ‘anything’ in the expression, ‘we could go on, n-n-not bother about anything’ (lines 231-232, interview 1) represents an incident of gross indecency with a 9-year-old girl.
The same suspect uses the expression ‘the little sessions’ (lines 235-236, interview 1), a playful and child-like description to signify the manufacturing of child pornography. In ‘it took a long while to nurture her’ (lines 129-130, interview 4a), the term ‘nurture’ is used to suggest a caring, protecting, almost parental role, by an individual convicted of indecent assaulting his 8-year-old victim. The utterance, ‘just for general (. ) consoling’ (line 139, interview 4b) once again attends to the notion of support and reassurance. The use of ‘just’ has a mitigating function which minimises the significance of the act whilst excluding alternative accounts which cannot be acknowledged. For example, the suspect claims that physical contact with the alleged victim was ‘just for general (. ) consoling’ and avoids having to include the ‘as opposed to…’ (Lee, 1987). Once again, the criminal and sexual account of the offence remains unsaid.

In the utterance ‘I simply gave him a bath’ (lines 81-82, interview 5), the suspect assumes responsibility for washing the 13-year-old male victim of indecent assault. However, the incident is lessened with the use of ‘simply’, which depicts an unmotivated process to avoid attributing himself with intent (Lee, 1987). Similar to the use of ‘just’ in interviews 1 and 4b, the suspect avoids the ‘alternative’ sexual and criminal account of the offence. The utterance ‘we used to cuddle up. And everything’ (line 23, interview 6) utilises the ambiguous and euphemistic ‘everything’ to denote the physical trappings of an adult romantic relationship, potentially progressing from a ‘cuddle’ to the indecent assault of an 11-year-old boy. The suspect also claims ‘sort of-sor-sor he was cuddling we was kissing a bit .hhhh an:::d ummmm things got a bit further’ (lines 34-36, interview 6). The frequent use of ‘sort of’ and ‘a bit’ to minimise the indecency are coupled with the vague ‘things got a bit further’ to suggest the progression of bodily contact after the act of kissing. The suspect claims ‘things got a bit further’ rather than ‘I/we went a bit further’ to externalise the action and minimise the accountability of the suspect. Agency-neutralised descriptions, such as those incorporating the externalising device ‘got’, appear as unmotivated and avoid attributing causality as in ‘the vase got broken’ and ‘Mary got herself pregnant’ (Wooffitt, 1991).
Normalisation

The suspected paedophiles strive to recreate the 'ordinariness' of two individuals embarking on a romantic companionship, 'I was attracted to Sam >I think Sam was attracted to me we had a very close relationship with each other<' (lines 31-33, interview 3) and 'sometimes myself and Sam ss-hhh () would be very close' (lines 45-46, interview 3). The suspect describes the bond between himself and the child as 'very close' and 'a very close relationship', utilising 'we' and 'each other' to enhance the notion of mutual accountability. The ambiguous use of 'close' avoids physical and emotional discourse, however, the introduction of 'attraction' generates the possibility of desirability and a sexual relationship, despite the fact that the individuals involved are a 49-year-old male and his 12-year-old victim. The seemingly innocuous 'just good friends' (line 230, interview 1), discussed in Chapter 7, is a fascinating example of an attempt to normalise the relationship between a 52-year-old male and a 9-year-old female victim of gross indecency. Despite being inappropriate candidates for a sexual relationship and even a good friendship, the suspect proceeds with a descriptions of a romantic encounter, 'I mean hhh we could we could we could go on, n-n-not bother about anything then other times I said how'dya feel and she said oh yeah' (lines 231-233, interview 1). The suspect attempts to describe how he had a discussion with a 9-year-old girl about the instigation of sexual activity.

Further attempts to normalise the unconventional bond between a middle-aged male and a child include, 'we seemed to develop a sort of rapport, and were on the same wavelength and a sense of <humour>' (lines 42-44, interview 4a) and 'we did develop a sort of rapport' (lines 135-136, interview 4b). The 53-year-old teacher claims that he and an 8-year-old pupil shared an emotional connection more typically associated with adult companionships. In the utterance, 'we'd gone up to my room. Andrew laid down on the bed .hhhh ummmmm I: laid down next to him, sort of-sor-sor he was cuddling we was kissing a bit .hhhh and ummmmm things got a bit further' (lines 32-36, interview 6), the 11-year-old victim is imbued with such maturity and sexual awareness that he becomes a contender for a sexual partnership. The following extract demonstrates an alternative method of normalisation, 'I told his mother that I'd given him a bath' (lines 73-74, interview 5). The suspect attempts to justify the act of bathing his 13-year-old male victim by
claiming that his mother, an individual typically concerned for the welfare of her son, was aware of the incident and perceived it as unexceptional.

Victim blame
In addition to constructing a minimised and normalised narrative, the suspects also attempt to justify sexual contact as a consequence of the victims’ actions. The responsibility for instigating the relationship is attributed to the feelings of the child, ‘Sam was attracted to me’ (lines 31-32, interview 3). The victims are also characterised as willing, enthusiastic tutees, ‘she (. ) quite enjoyed being uh the little sessions’ (lines 235-236, interview 1), deceptively mature and sexually aware, ‘he was talking about going into this sort of nightclub he was talking about uhhhh drinking. >He was actually talking quite a bit about sex as well’ (lines 15-18, interview 6) and actively and persistently seeking the company of the suspect, ‘she was a girl who often used to come to me’ (lines 38-39, interview 4a), ‘she used to come up to me (. ) just about every day and stand with me’ (lines 127-128, interview 4b), ‘she was was running up to me so often’ (lines 134-135, interview 4b), ‘she would come crying and sit next to me wherever I was’ (lines 137-138, interview 4b) and ‘he got a bit upset there he wanted to carry on I said we couldn’t and ummmmm (3.1) after that he came round a couple more times and I tried to::: make a distance between us. Which he-I didn’t seem to like very much’ (lines 51-56, interview 6).

The opening questions posed by the police officers permit the suspects to present elaborate self-serving accounts which avoid sexual and criminal discourse and employ mitigating rhetorical devices. These devices help characterise the bodily contact between the suspect and the child as either negligible, an acceptable ingredient of an adult relationship or victim-instigated. However, rather than limit the interviewers’ opportunities to establish accountability and secure admission, the suspects’ inappropriate and more importantly, incomplete descriptions provide the interviewers with an opportunity to challenge the accounts and clarify detail.
The reformulating question

The early information-gathering part of the open interview, which encouraged the suspected paedophile to generate an extended, mitigating narrative, is vital for acquiring potentially incriminating information. However, this testimony is insufficient without the intervention of the police officer who must move beyond this self-serving account to verify the occurrence of sexual contact.

Extract 10 - Interview 4b

140 DC: Right. As part of that consoling would you ever
141 cuddle her and put your arms round her.
142 Susp: Umm I think probably >yes I have.<

The police officers' interventions occur immediately after the suspects' prolonged narratives in all of the open interviews, an example of which is provided in extract 10 (for remaining interventions see Appendix 2, specifically line 237 of interview 1, line 49 of interview 3, lines 54-56 of interview 4a and lines 84 and 86 of interview 5). These interventions share a series of features and are termed 'reformulating questions', due to the fact that each intervention seeks further information and incorporates a transition from the inoffensive characterisation employed by the suspect regarding the nature of the adult-child relationship.

Initiating the reformulating question

All of the reformulating questions are minimal, an average of 13 words per turn, and commence with either 'right' or 'so', 'Right you mean...' (line 237, interview 1), 'Right. How old's Sam...' (line 49, interview 3), 'Right. When you say...' (line 54, interview 4a), 'Right. As part of that consoling...' (line 140, interview 4b), 'So you both in the bathroom...' (line 84, interview 5) and 'So. You took it in turns...' (lines 96-97, interview 5). The use of the reformulation markers 'right' and 'so' at the onset of the turn indicate acceptance of the previous turn and a transition to a new agenda. More specifically, while the suspected paedophile's description of the relationship is not being dismissed as inappropriate, the markers suggest that specific details require clarification, as in 'let's see if I've got this right'. In addition, all of the police officers make reference to the previous narrative, 'Right you mean the-the sexual sessions' (line 237, interview 1), 'Right. How old's Sam? When this' happening' (line 49,
interview 3), ‘Right. When you say that you’ve touched on the knee’ (lines 54-56, interview 4a), ‘Right. As part of that consoling’ (lines 140-141, interview 4b) and ‘So you both in the bathroom together then’ (lines 84 and 86, interview 5). The interviewers are pursuing the implications of the normalised and minimised relationships, aware that the contact between the adult and the child warranted legal intervention.

The functions of the reformulating question
The reformulating questions embody a discursive ‘switch’. Firstly, the reformulations represent a move from the police officers’ ‘opening questions’, which permit the suspects to construct potentially innocuous explanations, to direct requests for more specific information. While the opening questions initiate the ‘opening up’ of the suspects’ narratives, the reformulating questions ‘close down’ the open interview. Secondly, the questions then seek to reformulate the suspects’ self-serving narratives and expose the intimate acts previously obscured by the mitigating descriptions. The reformulating questions re-establish the sexual and criminal nature of the events, attribute the suspects with accountability and invite the suspects to elaborate further.

Labelling the offence
The first function of the reformulating question is demonstrated in interview 1. The police interviewer skilfully switches from an innocuous opening question utilising emotional repertoire terminology, ‘How did you, how did you view your relationship, with Lucy’ (line 228-229) and the suspect’s euphemistic ‘little sessions’ (line 236) to a more direct claim, incorporating a criminal agenda and explicit bodily terminology, ‘you mean the-the sexual sessions’ (line 237). The police officer is not seeking any new information, rather, the playful contact between the paedophile and the child is unambiguously reformulated as a sexual offence.

Seeking new physical detail
The second type of reformulating question is demonstrated in interviews 4a, 4b and 5 and represents a search for new information, specifically physical detail omitted from the suspect’s emotional account. The police officer’s utterance once again embodies a switch from an innocuous opening question, ‘Can you tell us about Emily then’ (line 35, interview 4a) and the suspected paedophile’s normalised account of ‘rapport’ with
an 8-year-old pupil, to a direct, bodily reference, ‘When you say that you’ve touched on the knee and on the calf’ (lines 54-55). The reformulation then invites the suspect to provide a further description of the physical part of the act, ‘can you just expand on \textit{that} a bit for us’ (lines 55-56). In interview 4b there is a switch from the ambiguous, ‘Do you want to tell us about Danielle?’ (line 124) and the normalised account of the ‘nurturing’ and ‘consoling’ of a young girl by her 53-year-old teacher, to a specific physical episode, ‘would you ever cuddle her and put your arms round her’ (lines 140-141), inviting the suspect to further explain the bodily contact. Finally, in interview 5, the police officer switches from an opening question with an absence of criminal and sexual discourse, ‘Could you tell me what happened with (2.4) Tom’ (line 71) and the suspect’s normalised ‘I told his mother...I simply gave him a bath’ (lines 73-82) to a sexual claim with physical repertoire terminology, ‘So you both in the bathroom together then...Naked?’ (lines 84 and 86). The interviewers introduce bodily details with implications for criminal accountability, whilst seeking agreement with their reformulations.

\textit{Seeking new criminal detail}

The reformulating question in interview 3 also depicts a search for new information, in this case, \textit{criminal} details overlooked by the suspect. The suspect’s graphic account of his relationship with the alleged victim, ‘we had a \textit{very} close relationship with each other<...sometimes myself and Sam ss-.h hh (.) would be very close we (.) would often kiss’ (lines 32-46), eliminates the need for the police officer to introduce physical repertoire terminology or re-characterise the contact between the paedophile and the child as sexual. The bodily details have already been provided by the suspect, however, the relationship described in the suspect’s narrative is normalised, depicting a bond between two mutually aware and accountable individuals. Subsequently, when the police officer asks, ‘How old’s Sam? When this’ happening’ (line 49), the interviewer is confirming the child status of the suspect’s ‘partner’ as a means of reformulating the relationship as \textit{criminal}. The switch, in this case, serves to recognize the illegality of the contact and establish the liability of the suspect. To determine whether these reformulations succeed in confirming the sexual and criminal accountability of the suspect and invoke admission, it is vital to examine the subsequent turns of the suspects.
The admission

Extract 11 - Interview 1

237 DC: Right you mean the-the sexual ses[sions. ]
238 Susp: [But even] th-
239 that's no excuse for what I did. I must
240 emphasise that, it's no excuse and I know (.)
241 it shouldn't have happened.

Extract 12 - Interview 3

49 DC: Right. How old's Sam? When this' happening.
50 Susp: Mmmm-seventy-th-uh seventy-four uhh he's about
51 twelve.

Extract 13 - Interview 4a

54 DC: Right. When you say that you've touched on the
55 knee and on the calf .hhhh can you just expand
56 on that a bit for us,
57 Susp: Umm (3.8) ju-just a hand on the knee >shake
58 the knee say yes you can do it< come on you can
59 do it.

Extract 14 - Interview 4b

140 DC: Right. As part of that consoling would you ever
141 cuddle her and put your arms round her.
142 Susp: Umm I think probably >yes I have.<

Extract 15 - Interview 5

84 DC: So you both in the bathroom together then?
85 Susp: Yes.=
86 DC: =Naked?
87 Susp: Uhh hhhhh at that point (. ) he was partially
88 clothed. I was still fully clothed. And I got
89 out of the bath. I put a dressing gown on.
90 Which is (. ) >pretty well standard procedure
91 cos I keep them behind the bathroom door<.
92 (3.8) And I gave him a dressing gown. Had he of
93 raised any objections >I would have left<.
94 (6.9) And he certainly didn't object when he
95 washed my back.

The suspected paedophile’s turns are shorter than the previous narratives and longer
than the turns of the police officers, an average of 26 words per turn. It is interesting
to note that every response commences with considerable conversational difficulty,
namely stuttered speech, ‘But even th-that’s no excuse’ (lines 238-239, interview 1) and ‘Mmmm-seventy-th-uh seventy-four’ (lines 50-51, interview 3), delaying devices, ‘Ummm (3.8) ju-just a hand’ (line 57, interview 4a) and ‘Umm I think probably’ (line 142, interview 4b) and audible out-breaths ‘Uhh hhhhh at that point’ (lines 87-94, interview 5). These obstructions could be a consequence of the abrupt use of closed questioning and explicit sexual and criminal discourse in the police reformulations. Despite this tentative speech, all of the paedophiles admit to the allegations.

As with all of the suspects’ stories, the admissions are accompanied by discursive devices to mitigate the offending behaviour. In interview 1, the suspect claims ‘But even th-that’s no excuse for what I did. I must emphasise that, it’s no excuse and I know (. ) it shouldn’t have happened’ (lines 238-241). The suspect implicitly accepts the reformulated ‘sexual sessions’ by claiming that ‘it shouldn’t have happened’, yet attempts to normalise the incident by constructing the account as coming from a sincere, rational individual, ‘it’s no excuse and I know it shouldn’t have happened’. The suspect also blames the victim by claiming that her enjoyment was no justification for his role in situation and minimises the sexual aspect of the question by using the euphemistic ‘what I did’ and ‘it shouldn’t have happened’. The suspect in interview 3 acknowledges the allegations with, ‘Mmmm-seventy-th-uh seventy-four uhh he’s about twelve’ (lines 50-51), a final attempt to attribute uncertainty to the child status of his sexual ‘partner’.

The disclosure of physical contact in interview 4a, ‘Ummm (3.8) ju-just a hand on the knee >shake the knee say yes you can do it<’ (lines 57-59), also portrays the incident as inconsequential and impersonal. The use of ‘a hand’ not ‘my hand’, ‘the knee’ rather than ‘her knee’, ‘say yes you can do it’ not ‘I said yes you can do it’ and the detached gesture ‘shake the knee’, relegates the suspect’s role to a supportive teacher. The use of ‘just’ in ‘ju-just a hand on the knee’ once again minimises the significance of the contact and eradicates the need for the suspect to acknowledge alternative accounts (Lee, 1987). In interview 4b, the seemingly concrete admission of physical contact, ‘yes I have.’ (line 142) is preceded by an attempt to question the event, ‘Umm I think probably’.
The final fascinating admission, initially a distinct ‘Yes’ (line 85, interview 5), is accompanied by a further self-serving narrative, which seeks to justify the bathing of a 13-year-old boy. The suspect manages the dilemma of confessing to the allegation whilst mitigating his accountability by employing minimising discourse, ‘at that point (.) he was partially clothed. I was still fully clothed’, normalisation ‘which is pretty well standard procedure’ and victim blame, ‘Had he of raised any objections >I would have left<. (6.9) And he certainly didn’t object when he washed my back’, implying that the child was responsive to the act.

‘Closed’ interviewing

The previous section demonstrates how the open interviewing structure analysed in Chapter 7, was also observed in four of the remaining interviews. The contrasting closed interviewing structure demonstrated in Chapter 8, characterised by the police officer assuming the role of narrator, the prevalence of sexual and criminal terminology and the utilisation of discursive devices for holding the floor and restricting suspect intervention, can also be observed in the remaining interviews.

The police officer’s narrative

Extract 16 - Interview 7

377 DC: °Okay,° (2.4) what Vicky is saying is that you
378 went towards her bed and started to push her
379 out of her bed which she landed on the floor on
380 the other side, to which then you went round
381 (.) a::nd she remembers banging her head on the
382 wall, she landed on her back .hhh ummm and
383 again she was wearing knickers. She can’t
384 recall what you were wearing. And (.) that (.)
385 you then proceeded to take hold of her arms
386 with one of your hands and held them behind her
387 head, before doing that you got hold of her
388 legs and put them over your shoulders? With one
389 hand holding h-her arms behind her head you
390 then took your penis with your other hand and
391 inserted it into her vagina.
392 Susp: °No.° ‘Cos Simon-Simon was nextdoor, with the
393 door wide open?
394 DC: She’s alleging that you inserted your penis
395 into her vagina and had sex with her.
All of the police officers' closed narratives share qualities previously identified in Chapter 8 (for remaining narratives see Appendix 2, specifically lines 17-90 of interview 2, lines 42-75 of interview 8, lines 14-42 of interview 9 and lines 25-49 of interview 10). The closed narratives commence an average of 95 lines into the interview and, like the open interviews, immediately after the interview preliminaries. Subsequently, whether open or closed interviewing is implemented by the police officer, it is established early in the opening phase of the interview. The police officer's closed narratives generate an average of 64 words per turn, considerably more than the suspects' utterances in the closed interview and the police officer's utterances in the open interview, both an average of nine words per turn.

**Sexual and criminal categorisation**

In contrast with the non-threatening opening questions, which encourage the use of innocuous relationship talk, the closed narratives make the sexual nature of the offences explicit from the onset. The police officers construct a 'bodily' account using exclusively physical repertoire terminology with no evidence of the emotional repertoire terms favoured by the suspected paedophiles. These observations support the conclusions of the content analysis in Chapter 6. Each of the officers provides a graphic and exhaustive account of bodily activity, ranging from exhibitionism to sexual assault, 'you were masturbating y-yourself (2.8) you would be watching pornographic videos' (lines 22-23, interview 2), 'your erect penis was clearly visible' (lines 41-42, interview 2), 'you then took your penis with your other hand and inserted it into her vagina' (lines 389-391, interview 7), 'rubbing action from her knee upwards to her towards her thigh area' (lines 62-63, interview 8) and 'started to play with his (. ) genitals' (line 25, interview 9). While the opening questions failed to acknowledge the youthful and mistreated identity of the complainant, the closed narratives confirm the child status of the witness, 'this is going back to a time when she's not developed properly' (lines 32-33, interview 10) and 'Charlotte actually said it's been going on since she was four or five' (lines 25-26, interview 10). The closed narratives also suggest that the child is an unwilling and fearful recipient of the suspect's attention 'she said that she felt scared' (line 70, interview 8). The police
officers attend to the fact that there has been sexual contact and with a child, immediately formulating any potential account of a relationship as criminal.

The voice of the victim

The police interviewers maintain a degree of informality by using the victim's first names and assume the role of storyteller by speaking on behalf of the victims in the third person, 'What Sarah does describe is that umm (.) she would regularly go into your house' (line 17-18, interview 2), 'what Vicky is saying is that you went towards her bed' (line 377-378, interview 7), 'Beth (.) describes (.) umm an incident th-that she said happened some time last year' (line 42-43, interview 8), 'Matthew is saying that (.) umm (.) on the-on the first occasion that he went round to your house' (line 14-16, interview 9) and 'Charlotte actually said it's been going on since she was four or five' (line 25-26, interview 10).

Physical repertoire terminology

In the closed interviews, the police officers use the preferred physical repertoire terminology even when quoting the alleged victim. Subsequently, and rather implausibly, the statements of the children are attributed with explicit sexual discourse. For example, from the statement of an 8-year-old girl, 'she says you were masturbating y-yourself' (lines 22, interview 2) and 'she says...your erect penis was clearly visible' (lines 40 and 41-42, interview 2), a 13-year-old girl, 'what Vicky is saying is that...you then took your penis with your other hand and inserted it into her vagina' (line 377 and 389-391, interview 7) and a 12-year-old boy, 'he said that you removed his trousers...And started to play with his (. ) genitals' (lines 21-22 and 25, interview 9). This suggests that the police officers are imposing their own preferred physical repertoire terms on the accounts of the victims.

Euphemism

There is also evidence of more appropriate child-like discourse, 'Beth had said that (.) you'd done dirty things. That you'd made her (.) suck your thingy' (lines 48-50, interview 8), 'he would start doing things, sucking my willy' (lines 40-41, interview 9), 'she said, he's been touching me and feeling me and things' (lines 27-28, interview 10) and 'You put your hands up her top and you were messing about with her boobs' (lines 42-43, interview 10). The police officers in the open interviews
employed euphemisms, more commonly associated with the discourse of the paedophile, to emulate the suspects' characterisation of the bond between himself and the child. This permitted the suspect to generate an innocuous, self-serving narrative. However, euphemisms in the closed interviews often precede the accompanying explicit sexual version, ‘She explained. hhh been playing with my boobs. Do you want to clarify that boobs obviously were her breasts’ (lines 29-31, interview 10). The utterance implies that euphemism is the ‘sexual terminology’ of the alleged victim.

**Direct reported speech**

The police interviewer’s preference for speaking on behalf of the victim by indirect narration is frequently substituted by the use of ‘direct’ quotation, ‘he wouldn’t stop what he was doing he’d just carry on masturbating’ (lines 42-43, interview 2), ‘in her own words what she saw on the video in case he tried to do that with me’ (lines 73-75, interview 8), ‘he would cuddle me and kiss me on the mouth he would then (. ) try and get his tongue into my mouth. I’d hold my mouth tight’ (lines 28-30, interview 9), ‘he would try and undo my trousers and I’d be shaking (. ) he’d start kissing me’ (lines 36-37, interview 9) and ‘he’s been touching me and feeling me and things’ (lines 27-28, interview 10). The use of direct reported speech commonly achieves a sense of perceptual re-experience to support the factuality of a claim (Edwards, 1997).

**Holding the floor**

All of the police officers in the closed interviews recount elaborate stories with minimal intervention from the suspects. Each interviewer retains the floor until the story is complete by avoiding discursive devices which specify the end of a turn or invite the suspect to commence speaking, for example, falling (full stop) intonation, rising (questioning) intonation and tag questions. The police officers demonstrate that extended turns are underway and discourage the suspects from taking the floor by utilising a range of rhetorical devices to mask transition-relevance places and minimise intervention. Fillers, audible in-breaths, mid-utterance pauses and continuing intonation, previously identified in Chapter 8, are abundant in the remaining sample of closed interviews. In the entire series of closed narratives, there are 28 fillers, 31 audible in-breaths, 26 mid-utterance pauses and 41 cases of continuing intonation, a total of 126 indicators of retaining the floor in 166 lines of speech (devices are indicated in bold).
‘Fillers’ are delaying devices which enable the police interviewers to hold the floor whilst thinking of what next to say, ‘you were hugging her (.) umm and kissing her saying that you were sorry’ (line 45-47, interview 8), ‘He says that uh y’know when he w-when he was crying’ (line 27-28, interview 9) and ‘it’s been going on for quite a while uhh and she talked about recently’ (line 36-38, interview 10). Fillers conceal audible completion points and circumvent invitations for the suspect to talk. When a filler is accompanied by a prolonged pause, the police officer is indicating that he has not finished and the suspect has not been invited to commence his turn, ‘Umm he told me it was alright umm (10.7) you’d say don’t worry’ (lines 32-34, interview 9).

Audible in-breaths signify that the police officers are about to talk rather than surrender the floor to the next speaker, ‘it was on the lips .hhhh she said that she felt scared when you did this’ (lines 69-71, interview 8), ‘it’s been going on since she was four or five .hhhhhh >so what been happening’ (lines 25-27, interview 10), ‘She explained .hhh been playing with my boobs’ (lines 29-30, interview 10) and ‘she’s not developed properly, .hhh but she’s talking about her chest’ (lines 32-34, interview 10). The in-breaths are often accompanied by fillers to maintain possession of the turn, ‘she landed on her back .hhh ummm and again she was wearing knickers’ (line 382-383, interview 7).

Prolonged pauses in the middle of an utterance leave the speech grammatically incomplete, discouraging the suspect from taking the floor, ‘Okay, (2.4) what Vicky is saying’ (line 377, interview 7), ‘And that (2.8) you began to rub your hand on’ (line 52, interview 8), ‘having been consoled by you and (. ) the (. ) kissing part of things’ (line 16-17, interview 9) and ‘I’d hold my mouth tight (. ) and (0.8) I’d tell him I’m not like that’ (lines 30-31, interview 9). When the pauses are also accompanied by fillers, this magnifies the effect of the delaying device, ‘Beth (. ) describes (. ) umm an incident’ (line 42, interview 8) and ‘Matthew is saying that (. ) umm (. ) on-the-on the first occasion’ (line 14, interview 9).

The use of continuing intonation, indicated in the extracts by the use of commas, also prevents turn transition by mimicking the enunciation of an item in an unfinished list, ‘he did that the skirt, sort of, came up higher’ (line 64, interview 8), ‘undo my trousers in the hallway, he would start doing things, sucking my willy’ (lines 40-41,
interview 9) and 'you were stood in front of him, so he's standing on the stairs and you're facing him .hhh and he said that you removed his trousers, and his-and his underwear' (lines 19-23, interview 9). The use of such discursive devices to hold the floor excludes the suspect and ensures that, if they want to respond to the police officer's allegations, they must interrupt at an 'inappropriate' location in the narrative.

The suspect's mid-narrative denials

The suspected paedophiles do, on rare occasions, attempt to respond to the allegations during the police officer's narrative. The suspects' utterances all refute the accusations and take the form of either an outright denial, a specific denial or a hypothetical denial. Given the absence of an explicit invitation by the interviewer for the suspect to take the floor, it is crucial to examine where and how the suspects take the opportunity to deny the allegations. In addition, how do the police officers subsequently deal with the suspects intervening denials?

The outright denial

Extract 17 - Interview 10

36  DC:  She said can't really remember i-i-it's been
37  going on for quite a while uhh and she talked
38  about recently the Saturday th-the most
39  recently the Saturday before you went into
40  hospital. (2.8) So what happened then. She says
41  that you told her to go g-go into the front
42  room? You put your hands up her top and you
43  were messing about with her boobs.
44  Susp:  "No, I'm [sorry ]
45  DC:  [And she] indicated actually under-
46  under the clothing, so you're sort of inside, a
47  vest or t-shirt or whatever she was wearing.

The provision of a prolonged account by the interviewer, lacking an explicit invitation for the suspect to respond to the accusations, eliminates the need for the suspect to negotiate blame. Subsequently, the most frequent rebuttals, the outright denials, are direct, succinct and lack elaboration, 'That's false' (line 51, interview 8),
‘No way’ (line 24, interview 9), ‘No’ (line 26, interview 9) and ‘No, I’m sorry’ (line 44, interview 10).

The segments of closed narrative which occur immediately before the outright denials also share a number of features. It is interesting to note that each of the police officers' utterances ends with falling or stopping intonation, indicated by the use of the full-stop, ‘Beth had said that () you’d done dirty things. That you’d made her () suck your thingy.’ (lines 48-50, interview 8), ‘he said that you removed his trousers, and his-and his underwear.’ (lines 21-23, interview 9), ‘And started to play with his () genitals.’ (line 25, interview 9) and ‘You put your hands up her top and you were messing about with her boobs.’ (lines 42-43, interview 10). Falling or stopping intonation is a paralinguistic cue for the end of a turn, uncommon in the discourse of the police officer. The cue justifies the discursive intervention of the suspect who takes the floor to deny the allegations.

It is essential to consider the content of the police officer’s previous utterance to establish which component of the allegations the suspect is denying. Each of the police officers had been describing an incident in which the suspects were actively involved in sexual contact with the alleged victims. In interview 8, the suspect denies that he forced the victim to perform a sexual act, ‘made her () suck your thingy’. In interview 9, the suspect disagrees with the allegation that he undressed the victim, ‘removed his trousers, and his-and his underwear’ and ‘started to play with his () genitals’. In interview 10, the suspect refutes the suggestion that the victim had not ‘developed properly’, that he had put his hands inside the victim’s clothing and was ‘messing about with her boobs’. The outright denials materialise during the police officers narrative, which suggests that the suspects are contesting elements of the developing account.

The mid-narrative outright denials are not addressed by the police officers, who proceed with the closed narratives, often assisted by the use of ‘And...’ to retain the floor. One of the police officers actually interrupts the suspect’s denial, recommencing his narrative immediately after the suspect has denied the allegations and before he has an opportunity to continue ‘[And she] indicated actually under-under the clothing’ (lines 45-46, interview 10). It is interesting to note that, if you
disregard the interjections of the suspects (indicated in the following extracts by //), the adjacent turns of the police officers represent continuous utterances, 'Beth had said that (. ) you’d done dirty things. That you’d made her (. ) suck your thingy. In her own words//And that (2.8) you began to rub your hand on her leg’ (lines 48-53, interview 8), 'he said that you removed his trousers, and his-and his underwear//And started to play with his (. ) genitals' (lines 21-25, interview 9) and 'You put your hands up her top and you were messing about with her boobs//And she indicated actually under-under the clothing' (lines 42-46, interview 10). The police officers do not take the opportunity to pursue the denials with further questioning to establish exactly which allegations the suspects are refuting.

The hypothetical denial

Extract 18 - Interview 7

387 head, before doing that you got hold of her
388 legs and put them over your shoulders? With one
389 hand holding h-her arms behind her head you
390 then took your penis with your other hand and
391 inserted it into her vagina.
392 Susp: °No.° 'Cos Simon-Simon was nextdoor, with the
393 door wide open?
394 DC: She’s alleging that you inserted your penis
395 into her vagina and had sex with her.

As previously discussed in Chapter 8, the suspects also provide hypothetical denials, constructing a supposed account of normalised behaviour to obscure actual events and avoid explicitly admitting or denying the allegations. The denials utilise rhetorical devices previously identified in interview 2, 'would', as in, 'the first thing I would do is cover up' (line 73, interview 2), 'I wouldn't know who it was' (lines 73-74, interview 2) and 'If I did it would have been three or four years ago' (lines 59-60, interview 8), the 'if-then' structure, for example, 'if I was (2.8) lying on or sitting in a chair masturbating and I heard my door go (then) the first thing I would do is cover up' (lines 71-73, interview 2) and 'If I did (then) it would have been three or four years ago' (lines 59-60, interview 8) and a third additional device, 'because', as in, 'the first thing I would do is cover up. Because I wouldn’t know who it was' (lines, interview 2), 'No. 'Cos Simon-Simon was nextdoor, with the door wide open? (lines 392-393, interview 7) and 'No. (2.1) (because) If I did it would have been three or
four years ago' (lines 59-60, interview 8). These devices assert the implausibility of the allegations, undermining the logic of the police officer’s account and subsequently the account of the alleged victim.

Once again, the three mid-narrative hypothetical denials commence after the police officer signals the end of the turn. In interview 2, the police officer concludes the turn by seemingly requesting a response from the suspect, ‘what can you say about that (. ) .hmmm I mean that’s a that’s a fairly sort of comprehensive picture that’ (lines 67-69). In interview 7, the end of the turn is suggested by the presence of stopping intonation, ‘you then took your penis with your other hand and inserted it into her vagina.’ (lines 389-391). Finally, in interview 8, the interviewer employs rising, questioning intonation, ‘You didn’t tell her you were sorry for hitting her?’ (lines 57-58). In each case, the police officer is attending to the responsibility of the suspect for physical contact with the victim.

Rather than pursue these intricate explanations, the police officers are not deflected from telling the story. The first police officer repeats the previous allegation, ‘She’s alleging that you inserted your penis into her vagina’ (lines 394-395, interview 7) and the second simply continues the account, ‘She demonstrates quite clearly the sort of a rubbing action from her knee upwards’ (lines 61-63, interview 8). The remaining interviewer disputes the denial before returning to his closed narrative, ‘but she says you do and tha-that’s what the whole (. ) that’s what she’s saying’ (lines 83-85, interview 2). The police officers do not permit the hypothetical denials to become the focus of the interview. In each of the police officer’s subsequent turns, the logic arguments of the paedophiles are terminated with an immediate switch from the hypothetical to descriptions of the observed, tangible actions of the suspect.

The specific denial

Extract 19 - Interview 2

23 you would be watching pornographic videos umm
24 (. ) she describes them as quite explicit ummm
25 (1.4) animal-sort of animals were involved in
26 one or two of the videos she’s described as
27 well,
The suspects also refute less pertinent details, for example, in extract 19, the suspect denies ownership of a particular type of pornographic material by claiming that he ‘Never had an animal video’ (line 28). The comma at the end of the police officers preceding turn, ‘animals were involved in one or two of the videos she’s described as well,’ (lines 25-27, interview 2) indicates continuing intonation, which may have given the suspect an opportunity to take the floor and respond to the allegations. Similar to the previous hypothetical denial, the suspect’s response is dismissed by the interviewer, ‘you’ve already said at-at-at the beginning that you, you’ve already agreed that you did show her at some point’ (lines 29-31, interview 2), who subsequently proceeds with the closed narrative.

The end of the narrative

Extract 20 - Interview 8

61 DC: She demonstrates quite clearly the sort of a rubbing action from her knee upwards to her thigh area (2.3) and she said when he did that the skirt, sort of, came up higher toward-towards her thigh. She said Mum was there and she said Alice was there as well. And Mum had shouted at you t-to stop being so rude. And told you to get off. That you gave you-that you gave her a kiss and it was on the lips .hhhh she said that she felt scared when you did this (. ) when (. ) you were rubbing her leg because of what she’d seen on the videos that she’d watched with you. uh, in her own words what she saw on the video in case he tried to do that with me.
76 Susp: That’s (. ) n-not true.

When the police officers come to the end of their closed narratives, the utterances often conclude with falling or stopping intonation, indicated by a full-stop, for example, ‘you inserted your penis into her vagina and had sex with her.’ (lines 394-395, interview 7), ‘what she saw on the video in case he tried to do that with me.’
In the concluding lines of the closed narratives, the police officers are describing incidents of sexual contact precipitated by the suspected paedophiles, 'sh-she recalled a number of occasions you would try and cover yourself up... but she says soon as .hh you realised it was her then you would carry on' (interview 2), 'you inserted your penis into her vagina and had sex with her' (interview 7), 'you gave her a kiss and it was on the lips... you were rubbing her leg' (interview 8), 'he'd start kissing me... he'd then undo my trousers in the hallway, he would start doing things, sucking my willy' (interview 9) and 'you're sort of inside, a vest or t-shirt or whatever she was wearing' (interview 10). Each utterance represents a statement, addressing the suspect’s accountability and the extent of the bodily contact between the paedophile and the child. However, the absence of a direct request for the suspect to respond to the allegations eliminates the need for the suspect to generate an elaborate explanation. Consequently, the suspects refute the police officer’s final claims using outright denials, ‘No. (. ) I’m sorry no’ (line 91, interview 2), ‘No (. ) it didn’t happen’ (line 396, interview 7), ‘That’s (. ) n-not true’ (line 76, interview 8) and ‘No’ (line 51, interview 10), and a concise hypothetical denial, ‘Th-that would never have happened’ (line 43, interview 9). The police officers once again fail to address the final rebuttals of the suspects and continue the interviews by either changing the subject or finishing with a closing question.
Changing the subject

Extract 21 - Interview 9

kept saying I’m not gay (5.2) he said he’d then
undo my trousers in the hallway, he would start
doing things, sucking my willy (8.0) this is in
the hallway while he’s stood on the stairs.
Susp: Th-that would never have happened.
DC: He (4.2) has your son got a motorbike?
Susp: No.
DC: Ever had one?
Susp: He::: has had a scramble bike,
DC: I think that’s what he’s talking about he’s not
talking about a motor-cos-y->to be fair your
son’s not sixteen is he so he can’t<=
Susp: =He-didn’t-own-one.

Extract 22 - Interview 10

[And she] indicated actually under-
under the clothing, so you’re sort of inside, a
vest or t-shirt or whatever she was wearing.
This always takes place in his house, once you
took her up t-to your room?
(5.2)
Susp: °No°.
DC: Did you go out that evening?
Susp: °I ca-° .hhh I can’t remember the last few
weeks.
(3.8)
DC: °Mmm.°
Susp: She came round (4.2) she come round (.) to do
the lawns and I says >no you can’t cos I’ve
gotta go somewhere, but that wasn’t a Sunday
that was a during the week< .hhhhh °sure of it."
the police officer to ultimately verify the suspect's rejection of the accusations for the record.

The closing question

Extract 23 - Interview 2

86 occasions you would try and cover yourself up
87 .h hh because you’re quite right in what you’re
88 saying >you might not know who it is< but she
89 says soon as .hh you realised it was her then
90 you would carry on? .hhh ummm=
91 Susp: =°No.° (. ) I’m sorry no.
92 DC: So you’ve never .hhh masturbated yourself in
93 [front]
94 Susp: [But, ]
95 DC: of Sarah?

Extract 24 - Interview 7

394 DC: She’s alleging that you inserted your penis
395 into her vagina and had sex with her.
396 Susp: >No (. ) it didn’t happen<
397 DC: °I thought you were gonna say no° hehh heh
398 hehh. So you deny that that took place.

Extract 25 - Interview 8

70 .h hh she said that she felt scared when you
71 did this (. ) when (. ) you were rubbing her leg
72 because of what she’d seen on the videos that
73 she’d watched with you. uh, in her own words
74 what she saw on the video in case he tried to
75 do that with me.
76 Susp: That’s (. ) n-not true.
77 DC: D-deny-denying that that took place?

The closing questions enable the police officers to summarise the sexual allegations and invite the suspected paedophiles to confirm the interviewers' version of events, 'So you’ve never .hhh masturbated yourself in front...of Sarah?' (lines 92-93 and 95, interview 2), 'I thought you were gonna say no hehh heh hehh. So you deny that that took place' (lines 397-398, interview 7) and 'D-deny-denying that that took place?' (line 77, interview 8).
The closing questions represent the first direct invitation for the suspected paedophiles to contribute to the discursive interaction. However, this is where any similarity with the previous opening question ends. Rather than permit the suspects to provide an innocuous response using relationship talk, the closed question addresses specific physical allegations. The closing question interview 2 incorporates an explicit sexual accusation 'So you've never .hhh masturbated yourself in front...of Sarah?', 'so you deny that that took place' in interview 7 refers to allegations that the suspect had sexual intercourse with the victim and in interview 8, 'denying that that took place' refers to allegations that the suspect insisted the child watch pornographic videos.

Whilst the opening questions employ an open-ended 'tell me about' format, surrendering the floor to the suspect for an unspecified period, the closing questions inhibit the suspect’s forthcoming response to a 'yes'/'no' confirmation of the given account. Not only is there no pressure for the suspect to compromise himself by telling his side of the story, the closing questions actually presuppose negative responses from the suspects, 'So you've never...' (line 92, interview 2), 'thought you were gonna say no... so you deny...' (lines 397 and 398, interview 7) and 'denying that that took place?' (line 77, interview 8), possibly as a consequence of the suspect’s previous mid-narrative denials. The closed interview is finally 'opened up' to the suspect, however this is only to refute the allegations.

*The denial*

Extract 26- Interview 7

397 DC: °I thought you were gonna say no° hehh heh
398 hehh. So you deny that that took place.
399 Susp: Yes. Deny it.

Extract 27 - Interview 8

77 DC: D-deny-deny-denying that that took place?
78 Susp: I'm denying all that yeah.

Each of the police officers obtain an outright denial. The succinct rebuttals enable the suspects to discredit the police officer's elaborate narratives, whilst leaving the
interviewers with nothing discursive to 'work with'. The denials are accepted by the police officers as the 'end point' and the interviews are terminated. Further confirmation that the closing questions seek to establish denial in the suspect's testimony is provided in interview 2:

Extract 28 - Interview 2

92 DC: So you've never .hhh masturbated yourself in
93 [front]
94 Susp: [But, ]
95 DC: of Sarah?
96 Susp: The only >the only< (. ) person out of the four
97 hhhh females in that family .hhhh that's seen
98 me with an erection is Brenda.
99 DC: Right. So in answer to my previous question
100 .hhhh what I'm saying t(hhh)o you is >have you
101 ever masturbated in front of Sarah?<
102 Susp: ☓N:::o.☎

The interviewer's first closing question, 'So you've never .hhh masturbated yourself in...front...of Sarah? (lines 92-93 and 95, interview 2) does not elicit a clear denial from the suspect. The suspect employs a specific denial, not unlike the previous 'Never had an animal video' (line 28, interview 2), to deny his sexual arousal in the presence of particular family members, 'The only >the only< (. ) person out of the four hhhh females in that family .hhhh that's seen me with an erection is Brenda' (lines 96-98). The police interviewer treats the specific denial as an inadequate response to the closing question and subsequently restates the closing question with the reformulation markers 'right' and 'so'. The notion of repetition is enhanced by the utterance, 'in answer to my previous question...what I'm saying to you is'. Repeating, as a means of 'clarifying' a question, treats the speaker's first response as 'not answering' (Atkinson and Drew, 1979). Rather than permit the suspect to provide an elaborate and innocuous response, the closed question once again incorporates a specific sexual allegation 'have you ever masturbated in front of Sarah?' (lines 100-101, interview 2). The question restricts the suspect's forthcoming response to either agreeing or disagreeing with the allegation. When the suspect's provides an outright denial in response to the second closing question, it signifies the end of the interview.
Concluding remarks

The previous comparative analysis confirms that the two distinct ‘open’ and ‘closed’ styles of police interviewing, with implications for admission and denial in suspected paedophiles, are evident in the entire sample of eleven police-paedophile interviews.

Table 9: Details of interviews incorporating style of police interviewing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Age of suspect</th>
<th>Offence</th>
<th>Gender of victim</th>
<th>Age of victim</th>
<th>Response of suspect</th>
<th>Interview style</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>Indecent photographs of children, gross indecency</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>9-13</td>
<td>Admission</td>
<td>Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>Gross indecency</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>8-12</td>
<td>Denial</td>
<td>Closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>Indecent assault, buggery</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Admission</td>
<td>Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4a</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>Indecent assault</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Admission</td>
<td>Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4b</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>Indecent assault</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Admission</td>
<td>Open</td>
</tr>
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<td>5</td>
<td>51</td>
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<td>Male</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Admission</td>
<td>Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>Indecent assault</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Admission</td>
<td>Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Gross indecency, attempted rape, rape</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Denial</td>
<td>Closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Gross indecency</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>Closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>52</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Denial</td>
<td>Closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>Indecent assault</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>5-10</td>
<td>Denial</td>
<td>Closed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The interviews in which the suspected paedophiles admit to the accusations (interviews 1, 3, 4a, 4b, 5 and 6) tended to be those in which the police officers employed ‘open’ interviewing, while the interviews in which the suspects denied the accusations (2, 7, 8, 9 and 10) were associated with the ‘closed’ style of police interviewing. It is necessary to consider the implications of these findings for the future development of the police interviewing of suspected paedophiles.
CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSION

Summary of findings

The findings of the preceding empirical chapters can be summarised. The content analysis in Chapter 6 confirmed that police officers and paedophiles describe sexual acts between adults and children differently within the confines of the investigative interview. The quantitative analysis revealed a number of interesting and statistically significant associations regarding speaker and types of description used. The suspects exhibited a preference for emotional repertoire terms and euphemisms, while the police officers used physical repertoire terms. When the police officers used euphemisms, it was predominantly to 'quote' the alleged victim. The findings offer support for early research on the language of pro-paedophilia material and strategies for police interviewing.

Discourse analysis then explored what was happening when the police officers and suspects used these repertoires. The case study examined in Chapter 7 demonstrated that the likelihood of the suspect admitting the accusation was associated with 'open' police interviewing. The 'open' interview was characterised by the police officer surrendering the floor to the suspect using an innocuous 'opening' question, encouraging the suspect to tell the story. The suspect was permitted to recount a mitigating narrative, incorporating minimisation, normalisation and inappropriate description with no interruption from the police officer. The police officer then adopted explicit terminology in the form of a 'reformulating question', to readdress the sexual and criminal aspects of the relationship. This enabled the interviewer to elicit an incriminating disclosure from the suspect.

In Chapter 8, the likelihood of the suspect denying the accusation was related to the use of 'closed' police interviewing. In the 'closed' interview, the police officer assumed role of narrator, formulating an explicitly sexual and criminal narrative.
under the guise of the ‘victim’. By employing linguistic devices to hold the floor, the police officer restricted the suspect’s turns, forcing them to interrupt the ensuing account with various denials. The concluding ‘closing’ question finally invited the suspect to respond, yet limited the turn to confirming the police officer’s version of events. By providing no opportunity for the suspect to generate his own self-serving narrative, the interviewer permitted the suspect to refute the allegations with a simple denial. Chapter 9 presented a comparative analysis of ‘open’ and ‘closed’ interviewing and confirmed that the two techniques, and their impact on suspect admission and denial, were evident in the remainder of the sample.

Critical reflections

It is interesting to reconsider the theoretical and methodological approaches outlined in the introductory literature review chapters using a discourse analytic perspective. In Chapter 2, studies claim that cognitive distortions enable paedophiles to rationalise their offences (Barbaree, 2001, Durkin and Bryant, 1999, Marshall et al, 2001, Rogers and Dickey, 1991, Ward et al, 1997, Winn, 1996), for example ‘having sex with a child is a good way of teaching the child about sex’ and ‘a relationship with the child is enhanced by having sex with him/her’ (Abel et al, 1984). These cognitive distortions are perceived as evident in the content analysis of pro-paedophilia propaganda (deYoung, 1988, 1989) and the case histories of incarcerated sex offenders (Happel and Auffrey, 1995). Discourse analysts oppose the empiricist notion that the accounts of paedophiles are outward manifestations of internal cognitions, favouring the view that such psychological processes are constructed and oriented to in social activity (Potter, 2000).

In Chapter 3, the cognitive-behavioural model proposed by Gudjonsson (1992) views suspect admission in terms of social, emotional, cognitive, situational and physiological antecedents which precipitate confession. The research suggests that suspect admission is an outward manifestation of internal cognitions, a premise once again refuted by discourse analysts who claim that psychological processes should be examined in relation to outward skills directly observed in talk (Billig, 1999). Further studies outlined in Chapter 3 attempt to quantify rates of police interviewing
phenomena, for example, the frequency of accusatorial questioning in UK police forces (Clarke and Milne, 2001, McConville and Hodgson, 1993, Mortimer, 1994, Pearse and Gudjonsson, 1996). Discourse analysts would regard the abstraction of ‘interrogatory’ discourse from the context of the police interview as a failure to consider the language act as observable in and governed by the social context in which it is produced.

In that respect, it is also necessary to be sensitive to the potential tensions between discursive methodology and the use of content analysis in Chapter 6. Content analysis, a conventional and much-used social scientific method, was initially employed to summarise the transcriptions and confirm that the physical repertoire was characteristic of police talk and the emotional repertoire was characteristic of suspect talk. While revealing a number of interesting patterns in the incidence of conflicting descriptions of paedophilic acts, content analysis can only hint at how such descriptions might be used.

One particular example of the limitations of content analysis is the concept of ‘euphemisms’ as a definitional system. Chapter 6 describes how the paedophiles employ euphemisms as polite and ‘softened’ substitutes for physical repertoire terminology, for example, the use of ‘willy’ in place of ‘penis’. However, it can be argued that the expression ‘put fingers inside’, deemed a euphemism in Chapter 6, is more explicit than the physical repertoire term ‘digital penetration’. Furthermore, rather than denoting markedly minimised expressions, euphemisms may be characteristics of everyday language, while the associated physical repertoire terms adopted by the police officers are the upgraded, technical definitions. This introduces the notion of context and the significance of the social interaction in which the repertoires and euphemisms are used:

Extract 29 - Interview 1

DC: ...there’s one or two pictures in here that if you look at umm Lucy’s vagina and anal areas they’re really quite red.

Susp: That’s. Because. I rubbed-my-penis up and down between her cheeks.
In extract 29, ‘between her cheeks’ was considered a euphemistic version of the more brutal ‘anal’. This extract is reminiscent of the discursive work of Drew (1990), discussed in Chapter 4, who analysed opposing formulations of criminal acts by defence attorneys and alleged rape victims:

Counsel: It’s where uh (.) uh (0.3) gi:rls and fella:s meet isn’t it?
Witness: People go: there.

(Extract taken from Drew, 1990, p.45)

In the extract, the attorney describes the bar in which the alleged rape victim first encounters the defendant as a place where ‘gi:rls and fella:s meet’, a description which attends to gender-relevant companionship. The alleged victim manages the damaging implications of this formulation by employing the generalised ‘people go: there’ to escape the inference that it is a place where males and females socialise for sexual purposes. It can be argued that the suspect in extract 29 presents ‘between her cheeks’ as an alternative to ‘anal’ as a means of concealing the act of physical penetration and diminishing his own criminal liability. This example demonstrates how content analysis essentially glosses over significant interactional work and necessitates the discursive exploration of the transcriptions in Chapter 7.

In addition to examining how contrasting descriptions of paedophilic offences are negotiated within the police interview, the discourse analysis revealed two distinct styles of interviewing, one of which maximises the likelihood of admission in suspected paedophiles. The central tenet of discourse analysis is the notion that interlocutors are jointly responsible for the outcome of a discursive interaction. Therefore, it can be argued that the two ‘open’ and ‘closed’ interviewing styles are not merely adopted by the police officers, but are collaborative productions that manage and even necessitate, certain types of responses from the suspects. Whilst this is a possibility which would require further investigation, the findings of this thesis suggest that the police interviews are not between equal participants. Police interviews are conducted within the constraints of a pre-specified turn-taking system, violating the conventions of everyday conversation (Atkinson and Drew, 1979). Subsequently, the police interviews exhibit a conversational asymmetry which enables the officers to determine the agenda for discussion (Drew and Heritage, 1992).
In addition, the ‘open’ and ‘closed’ interviewing styles are evident from the onset of the interviews. The officers who utilise ‘closed’ interviewing are making assertions before inviting a response from the interviewee and this cannot be explained in terms of the suspects’ turns. Once ‘closed’ interviewing is initiated, there is no reason why the police officers cannot then ask the suspects about ‘relationships’ or initiate ‘open’ questioning as they maintain the power to do so for the duration of the interview. To summarise, there is little in the previous transcriptions to suggest that the suspect can determine whether the police interview is ‘open’ or ‘closed’, although an increased sample may reveal incidents where the suspects’ responses have an impact on the style of questioning adopted by the interviewer.

Implications of findings

With regard to the expected contribution of this thesis, the research represents a distinctive exploration of the discursive interaction between police officers and suspected paedophiles. The findings provide an understanding of how language clashes shape the progression of the investigative interview and offer guidelines about resolving the dilemma of the clash of repertoires. The emotional repertoire favoured by the paedophile is insufficient for obtaining accurate descriptions of criminal behaviour. However, rather than coercing the suspect to utilise graphic bodily terminology when discussing the paedophilic act, it is more effective for the police interviewer to adopt the relationship talk characteristic of the suspect and encourage the construction of a justificatory and potentially incriminating narrative. The police officer can then intervene and move beyond the mitigating account, to confirm the occurrence of sexual contact and secure admission.

A common assertion in police interviewing research is that officers are unable to convince blameworthy individuals to admit their guilt (Milne and Bull, 1999). Baldwin (1993) argued that ‘the great majority of suspects stick to their starting position - whether admission, denial, or somewhere in between - regardless of how the interview is conducted’ (p.188). However, the understanding that the police officer can determine the use of ‘open’ or ‘closed’ interviewing, with the suspect reacting discursively to the style of questioning, may offer hope to police officers.
The findings suggest that if police officers interview suspects effectively they can make a difference to the outcome.

Of course, 'open' interviewing is not being presented as a means of simply maximising convictions, due to the implications for wrongful sentencing and the ‘culture of confession’ discussed in Chapter 3. This project examined interviewing techniques used by police officers to question blameworthy suspects. However, 'open' interviewing is a potential tool for questioning all individuals accused of sexual offences against children. While 'open' interviewing can encourage confession in guilty paedophiles, it can also provide an opportunity for the wrongly accused to tell their stories. Due to the distinctive narrative format of the ‘open’ interview, individuals with nothing to divulge would have difficulty generating a self-serving, incriminating account. An investigation of the effectiveness of ‘open’ interviewing for the innocent is a possibility for future research.

A discourse-based training programme could be devised to help police officers effectively interview paedophiles. A training programme could encourage the police to examine audiotapes of ‘open’ and ‘closed’ interviews and recognise the implications of the two interviewing techniques for eliciting information. A refined ‘open’ interview schedule could instruct the officers on effective interviewing techniques. In addition to ‘open’ and ‘closed’ interviewing, the ‘emotional’ and ‘physical’ repertoires and ‘opening’, ‘reformulating’ and ‘closing’ questions would provide a recognisable vocabulary for skilled police officers to both reflect on their own interviewing practices and communicate their skills to less experienced officers.

There is significant potential for further research in this field. There were a number of potential contributory factors, not monitored in this study, which could be observed in future analysis. For example, this investigation did not consider the potential impact of the police officer’s familiarity with the suspect, knowledge of previous convictions, evidence against the suspect and any discursive interactions between the police officer and the suspect which may have occurred prior to the onset of the interview. The paedophiles in this sample knew their victims prior to the onset of the offending, which may have enabled the suspects to recount ‘relationship’ stories when prompted by the interviewing officer. Subsequently, the ‘open’ style of
interviewing, with invitations for the paedophile to construct an innocuous narrative of personal bonds and emotions, may be inappropriate for the interrogation of a suspect who denies knowledge of the victim.

It would be interesting to explore how generalisable these findings are to other investigative interviews. Obviously, an increased sample of police-paedophile interviews would corroborate the strength of the findings. By obtaining a range of police-paedophile interviews from other constabularies, it would be possible to determine whether these styles of interviewing are typical of police interviewers at Leicestershire Child Protection Unit. Further analysis could explore investigative interviews with other types of offender to determine whether these patterns of admission and denial are only characteristic of individuals who sexually offend against children. It may be that the ‘open’ interviewing schedule is suited to other offenders who possess self-serving perceptions of their relationships with their victims, for example, domestic abusers, rapists and murderers. If discourse analysis can identify ethical ways of encouraging a guilty paedophile to confess, it has a great deal to offer the study of police interviews in general.
REFERENCES


Division of Forensic Psychology Conference at the University of Manchester, April.


### Table 10: Corpus of physical and emotional repertoire terms

<table>
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<th>Physical repertoire</th>
<th>Including:</th>
<th>Emotional repertoire</th>
<th>Including:</th>
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<td>Anal</td>
<td>Anally, anus</td>
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<td>Affectionate</td>
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<td>Penetrated digitally</td>
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Table 11: Incidence of physical and emotional repertoire term use by police and suspects

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Table 12: Incidence of repertoire term use when used by police and suspects before other speaker uses term

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Table 13: Incidence of repertoire term use when used by police and suspects after other speaker uses term

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Table 15: Incidence of euphemism use by police and suspects

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Table 16: Incidence of euphemism use by police and suspects before and after other speaker uses euphemism

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Table 17: Incidence of euphemism use by police and suspects independently or as quotation

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<td>Total incidence</td>
<td>23</td>
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<td>106</td>
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APPENDIX 2

TRANSCRIPTIONS FOR CHAPTER 9

Open interviewing

Interview 1

228 DC: How did yo::u, how did you view your
229 relationship, with Lucy (.) [as it developed. ]
230 Susp: [Just good friends]
231 I mean .hhh we could we could go on, n-n-not bother about anything then other times
232 I said how’dya feel and she said oh yeah she
234 was .hhh I’m not saying this as any disrespect
towards Lucy but she (.) quite enjoyed being uh
236 the little sessions.
237 DC: Right you mean the-the sexual ses[sions. ]
238 Susp: [But even] th-
239 that’s no excuse for what I did. I must
240 emphasise that, it’s no excuse and I know (.)
241 it shouldn’t have happened.

Interview 3

27 DC: Do you wanna tell me about (1.4) w-a-about what
28 happened with Sam then?=
29 Susp: =Sam was a very good games tester. He used to
do a lot of testing-games-testing .h Allocator I
will admit I was attracted to Sam >I think Sam
was attracted to me we had a v::ery close
relationship with each other< .h Allocator but-n (1.6)
I was-f-f I tried to keep it as much as
possible at arms-arms length unti:::l (3.8)
.hhh uhhhh (.) it then happened in eighty-
fo::ur I’m not. Quite. Sure. What. Date. The
event. Was. .hhhh in the first part of
>nineteen eighty four< m::y business started to
go certainly downhill and I started to >suffer
very badly from (. ) depression.< .hhhh ummmm
an:::d (.) I became I used to go ab-about
every two weeks to::o get the tablets. .hhh
during this time it had got to the point
wher::e hhhh sometimes myself and Sam ss-.hhh
(.) would be very close we (.) would often kiss
b-.hhh at that point I made it very clear that
we weren’t going any::: (.) further.
49 DC: Right. How old’s Sam? When this’ happening.
Interview 4a

35 DC: Can you tell us about Emily then.
36 Susp: Emily (1.4) was a pupil of me at Daleside Primary School in the academic year nineteen ninety nine two thousand. She was a girl who often used to come to me (.) with problems or to ask questions. She was a well motivated pupil that lacked confidence in her own ability. (1.2) Ummmm we seemed to develop a sort of rapport, and were on the same wavelength and a sense of humour. Now my recall of any incidents with Emily is that (.) she sat near the front of the room and often (1.8) I (.) sort of >kneel at desks or sit at desks rather than stand< to look at work and in conversation about work in general conversation umm (.) to give her the encouragement to tell her yes she could manage the work, I have (.) touched her on the knee and the calf. Under the desk.

DC: Right. When you say that you've touched on the knee and on the calf .hmmm can you just expand on that a bit for us,

Susp: Ummm (3.8) just a hand on the knee >shake the knee say yes you can do it< come on you can do it.

Interview 4b

124 DC: Do you want to tell us about Danielle?
125 Susp: Ummm, Danielle was somebody that requested to come into my class, she was with me for two years, and, she used to come up to me (.) just about every day and stand with me in the playground or at the door? And it took a long while to nurture her onto other pupils >so that she would play with other pupils< (.) and not be with me all the time?

DC: "Right?"

134 Susp: Yes, because she was running up to me so often (.) again we did develop a sort of rapport .hmm ummm >very often in lesson times< she would come crying and sit next to me wherever I was .hmmm to help with work or (1.4) just for general (.) consoling,
140 DC: Right. As part of that consoling would you ever cuddle her and put your arms round her.
142 Susp: Umm I think probably >yes I have.<

Interview 5

71 DC: Could you tell me what happened with (2.4) Tom.
72 Susp: I gave Tom a bath at my house, I don't deny that. I told his mother that I'd given him a bath. He had been giving me a hand in the garden that day (0.8) uhh and helped unload the car. <I had a bath>. I washed his hair and told him to get in the bath. I ran more hot water into it. I put bubble bath into it for him. And then I washed him. W-we'd been shifting earth and dirt out the front and throwing it, levelling it, uhh (.) >I simply gave him a bath<. He stank (.) in all truthfulness. He smelt extremely sweaty and he was dirty.
74 DC: So you both in the bathroom together then?
75 Susp: Yes.=
76 DC: =Naked?
77 Susp: Uhh hhhhh at that point (.) he was partially clothed. I was still fully clothed. And I got out of the bath. I put a dressing gown on. Which is (.) >pretty well standard procedure cos I keep them behind the bathroom door<. (3.8) And I gave him a dressing gown. Had he of raised any objections >I would have left<. (6.9) And he certainly didn't object when he washed my back.
79 DC: So. You took it in turns he’s washed your back you’ve got out [of the bath he’s got,]
80 Susp: [I got out of the ] bath I got (.) into my dressing gown and I gave him a-a-a wash before I left the r-the bathroom. (9.0) I. Personally see nothing wrong or nothing improper about that.

Interview 6

13 DC: Tell me about (.) Andrew then.
14 Susp: I thought he was (.) somewhere around the sixteen eighteen Andrew hhhh he was talking about going into this sort of nightclub he was talking about uhhhh drinking. >He was actually talking quite a bit about sex as well.< So I actually:::uhhh got the impression that he was
about (3.4) . hhh about the uhhh late teens-and
also on the fact that he was just, leaving
school. Ummmm (2.2) very affectionate. Ummmm
we used to cuddle up. And everything. An:::d
(1.8) I had to go up to Copenhagen I came back
from Copenhagen that would be July:: I got a
two week break in my stay that was July uhhhhh
nineteen ninety nine? Uhhh Andrew came round
one afternoon, ummmmm, he was, yeah it was
Saturday afternoon, he came back round. He was
wearing a singlet an:::d (.) shorts.

DC: Mmm?

Susp: Mmmmm we’d gone up t:::o m:::y room. Andrew
laid down on the bed . hhhh ummmmm I::: : laid
down next to him, sort of-sor-sor he was
cuddling we was kissing a bit . hhhh an:::d
ummmmm things got a bit further, I-I-w-I was
actually . hhhh feeling his penis through his
shorts, >the top of his penis was com-came over
the top of his shorts it was visible< . hhhh
Andrew had got his hands down my back an:::d
was stroking my back. . hhhh uhhhh and
something something was said, >I can’t
remember exactly what but I suddenly became
aware that he wasn’t at Holywells Upper
where I thought he was< and he wasn’t about to
leave Holywells Upper, he was actually
Holywells Lower, >he was about to leave
Holywells Lower.< Which meant rather than
being seventeen-eigh-eighteen, he was sort of
eleven-twelve. At that point I was rapidly like
oh I’ve got a situation, (1.6) an:::d ummm I
think he got a bit upset there he wanted to
carry on I said we couldn’t and ummmmm (3.1)
after that he came round a couple more times
and I tried to::: make a distance between us.
Which he-I didn’t seem to like very much. I
thought it was too-y-too dangerous to have him
around.

Closed interviewing

Interview 2

DC: What Sarah does describe is that umm (. ) she
would regularly go into your house ummm (3.2)
quite unexpectedly sometimes ummm (4.1) she
talks about going into your front room and she
describes yourself sitting on a chair ummm and
she says you were masturbating y-yourself (2.8)
you would be watching pornographic videos umm
She describes them as quite explicit ummm (1.4) animal-sort of animals were involved in one or two of the videos she's described as well, 

Suspect: Never had an animal video=

Defendant: =Haven't you (2.4) you've already said at-at-at the beginning that you, you've already agreed that you did show her at some point,

Suspect: Absolutely, [yeah I-I'd]

Defendant: [Sarah ] a video so (2.0) that's not in dispute is it but sa-she's describing that fact that you've been masturbating yourself when she walked into the room .hhhh ummm (. ) and she also describes the fact that you wouldn't try and hide it >you would continue this-this act in her presence basically< .hhhh ummm she says you'd make no attempt to try and hide it and your erect penis was clearly visible, he wouldn't stop what he was doing he'd just carry on masturbating ummm, she didn't know what to do at the time, umm, she would freeze an-and leave shortly afterwards, .hhhhhh she goes onto talk about this ummm .hmmm this would happen on a regular-regular uh it would happen regularly and on several occasions she would walk into the room .hmm uh you would say to her it's only you and then you would carry on masturbating, as if it's not a problem, it's one of the girls,

Suspect: Mmm.

Defendant: It ain't not a problem, I'll carry on, ummm she can't remember the exact reasons why she would visit you in your house but (. ) she describes it-is-is as an open house and she would visit you-you on a regular regular times. Umrm (. ) she also describes that (. ) you would try and expla-explain your actions by .hmm stating to her >and she remembers the conversations that you would explain to her< that people think it's dirty but it's only natural .hmm and you would explain to her that th-what was happening on the video or the videos was normal .hmm and that's what people do, that's- that's normal. what can you say about that (. ) .hmm I mean that's a that's a fairly sort of comprehensive picture that,

Suspect: I-I hhhhh well the first thing I would say was that if I was (2.8) lying on or sitting in a chair masturbating and I heard my door go the first thing I would do is cover up. Because I wouldn't know who it was. (1.6) That's the
first thing I would say.

DC: Mmm (. ) and wh[at ab]

[And I] would certainly wouldn’t

I wou=

DC: =If they’ve got keys to come in (. ) an-and I

sort of=

Susp: =W-well I w- I certainly wouldn’t keep doing

it!

DC: (coughs) hhhhh but she says you do and tha-

that’s what the whole (. ) that’s what she’s

saying uhhh sh-she recalled a number of

occasions you would try and cover yourself up

.hhh because you’re quite right in what you’re

saying >you might not know who it is< but she

says soon as .hh you realised it was her then

you would carry on? .hhh ummm=

Susp: =°No.° (. ) I’m sorry no.

DC: So you’ve never .hhh masturbated yourself in

[front]

Susp: [But, ]

DC: of Sarah?

Susp: The only >the only< (. ) person out of the four

hhhh females in that family .hhhh that’s seen

me with an erection is Brenda.

DC: Right. So in answer to my previous question

hhhh what I’m saying t(hhh)o you is >have you

ever masturbated in front of Sarah?<

Susp: °N:::o.°

Interview 7

DC: "Okay," (2.4) what Vicky is saying is that you

went towards her bed and started to push her

out of her bed which she landed on the floor on

the other side, to which then you went round

(. ) a::nd she remembers banging her head on the

wall, she landed on her back .hhh ummm and

again she was wearing knickers. She can’t

recall what you were wearing. And (. ) that (. )
you then proceeded to take hold of her arms

with one of your hands and held them behind her

head, before doing that you got hold of her

legs and put them over your shoulders? With one

hand holding h-her arms behind her head you

then took your penis with your other hand and

inserted it into her vagina.

Susp: "No." 'Cos Simon-Simon was nextdoor, with the

door wide open?

DC: She’s alleging that you inserted your penis

into her vagina and had sex with her.
Interview 8

42 DC: Beth (. ) describes (. ) umm an incident th-that
she said happened some time last year she said
it was (. ) after Alice’s birthday, that she
was sat with yourself and that you were hugging
her (. ) umm and kissing her saying that you
were sorry for hitting her. On that evening
uhh, Beth had said that (. ) you’d done dirty
things. That you’d made her (. ) suck your
thingy. In her own words,

51 Susp: °That’s false.°

52 DC: And that (2.8) you began to rub your hand on
her leg which she said she was wearing a skirt
which (. ) started to ride up her her leg when
you were stroking it.

56 Susp: That’s false.

57 DC: You didn’t tell her you were sorry for hitting
her?

59 Susp: No. (2.1) If I did it would have been three or
four years ago.

61 DC: She demonstrates quite clearly the sort of a
rubbing action from her knee upwards to her
towards her thigh area (2.3) and she said when
he did that the skirt, sort of, came up higher
toward-towards her thigh. She said Mum was
there and she said Alice was there as well. And
Mum had shouted at you t-to stop being so rude.
And told you to get off. That you gave you-that
you gave her a kiss and it was on the lips
.hhhh she said that she felt scared when you
did this (. ) when (. ) you were rubbing her leg
because of what she’d seen on the videos that
she’d watched with you. uh, in her own words
what she saw on the video in case he tried to
do that with me.

76 Susp: That’s (. ) n-not true.

77 DC: D-deny-denying that that took place?

78 Susp: I’m denying all that yeah.

Interview 9

14 DC: Matthew is saying that (. ) umm (. ) on the-on
the first occasion that he went round to your
house, crying, that having been consoled by you and (. ) the (. ) kissing part of things .hhhh he said that he was taken into the hallway and was stood on the stairs. (0.6) whilst you were stood in front of him, so he's standing on the stairs and you’re facing him .hhh and he said that you removed his trousers, and his-and his underwear.

Susp: "No way".
DC: And started to play with his (. ) genitals.
Susp: No.
DC: He says that uh y’know when he w-when he was crying that he would cuddle me and kiss me on the mouth he would then (. ) try and get his tongue into my mouth. I’d hold my mouth tight (. ) and (0.8) I’d tell him I’m not like that. I’m not gay. He’s says you’re gay. Umm he told me it was alright umm (10.7) you’d say don’t worry. It’s just an experience. First time is always the worst "sort of thing". And then he said he would try and undo my trousers and I’d be shaking (. ) he’d start kissing me (4.6) I didn’t like being kissed by another bloke he kept saying I’m not gay (5.2) he said he’d then undo my trousers in the hallway, he would start doing things, sucking my willy (8.0) this is in the hallway while he’s stood on the stairs.

Susp: Th-that would never have happened.
DC: He (4.2) has your son got a motorbike?
Susp: No.
DC: Ever had one?
Susp: He::: has had a scramble bike,
DC: I think that’s what he’s talking about he’s not talking about a motor-cos-y->to be fair your son’s not sixteen is he so he can’t<=
Susp: =He-didn’t-own-one.

Interview 10

DC: Charlotte actually said it’s been going on since she was four or five .hhhhhh >so what been happening< and she said, he’s been touching me and feeling me and things (2.5) w-what do you mean by that? She explained .hhh been playing with my boobs. Do you want to clarify that boobs obviously were her breasts.
Alright? Now, this is going back to a time when she’s not developed properly, .hnh but she’s talking about her chest.
35 Susp: No.
36 DC: She said can't really remember i-i-it's been
37 going on for quite a while uhh and she talked
38 about recently the Saturday th-the most
39 recently the Saturday before you went into
40 hospital. (2.8) So what happened then. She says
41 that you told her to go g-go into the front
42 room? You put your hands up her top and you
43 were messing about with her boobs.
44 Susp: °No, I'm [sorry°.]
45 DC: [And she] indicated actually under-
46 under the clothing, so you're sort of inside, a
47 vest or t-shirt or whatever she was wearing.
48 This always takes place in his house, once you
49 took her up t-to your room?
50 (5.2)
51 Susp: °No°.
52 DC: Did you go out that evening?
53 Susp: °I ca-°. hhh I can't remember the last few
54 weeks.
55 (3.8)
56 DC: °Mmm°.
57 Susp: She came round (4.2) she come round (.) to do
58 the lawns and I says >no you can't cos I've
59 gotta go somewhere, but that wasn't a Sunday
60 that was a during the week< .hhhhh °sure of it.°