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# The Effects of Teacher Immediacy on Student Evaluations

Gail Victoria Rowden  
*University of Nebraska at Omaha*

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The Effects of Teacher Immediacy  
on Student Evaluations

A Thesis  
Presented to the  
Department of Communication  
and the  
Faculty of the Graduate College  
University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts  
University of Nebraska at Omaha

by  
Gail Victoria Rowden

May, 1995

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THESIS ACCEPTANCE

Acceptance for the faculty of the Graduate College,  
University of Nebraska, in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree, Master of Arts, University  
of Nebraska at Omaha.

Committee

Name	Department
<u>Shirley A. Stasch</u>	<u>Gerontology</u>
<u>Marshall Prubell</u>	<u>Communication</u>
<u>Robert E. Carlson</u>	<u>Communication</u>

Robert E. Carlson  
Chairman

4/18/95  
Date

## Abstract

This study extended previous research on teacher immediacy by examining the relationship between teacher immediacy and students' evaluations of the course and/or teacher. Immediacy, course evaluation, and teacher evaluation were also explored in relation to teacher gender and student gender. Results indicated that teacher immediacy had a significant effect on student evaluations. Gender also had a significant, although unexpected, effect on evaluations of both the teacher and the course. Discussion focused on the relevance of these variables for purposes of instructional training and future research.

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

There has been much research done in recent years on the effects of teachers' verbal and nonverbal immediacy on the atmosphere of the classroom and student learning. Research indicates that students like immediate teachers, those whose behaviors in the classroom promote friendly, comfortable relations with their students, and that student learning is directly affected by this immediacy (Kearney, Plax, & Burroughs, 1991).

In 1971 Mehrabian first defined immediacy as those communication behaviors that diminished the physical and psychological distance between people.

According to Manusov (1991), "immediate behaviors... communicate closeness, indicate liking, signal availability, express intensity of involvement, and reflect arousal" (p.239). These behaviors can be verbal, like remembering and using student names. But, immediacy, according to Kearney, et al., (1991), is more often shown by using "...nonverbal behaviors of approach, e.g., positive head nods, smiles, eye contact, vocal expressiveness, forward body leans, purposeful gestures, and close physical distance" (p.327). Teachers using these behaviors are likely to establish an image of friendliness and accessibility with their students.

The need for effective teaching methods in our schools today makes the role that teacher immediacy plays in students' learning and involvement in the classroom an important issue for communication scholars, and for the general public as well.

## Review of Literature

### Immediacy Behaviors

Research has shown that a major part of successful teaching hinges on the instructor's actual behavior toward the students in the classroom. Therefore, it follows that "teachers pay conscious attention to their style of communication and attempt to match that style with educational goals "(Bruschke & Gartner, 1991, p.213).

According to Manusov (1991), immediacy is:

often interpreted according to its relevance to an interactant... in general people assume that others act more immediately with those they like than with those they do not. Immediacy behaviors can.... communicate an evaluation of an interaction partner...those who communicate with others expressing immediate messages are more likely to see positive social characteristics in their interactional partner (p.239).

Allen, O'Mara, & Long (1987), state that "...immediacy is the actual approach behaviors of a person toward another person or situation, while nonimmediacy is the actual avoidance of

a person or situation (e.g., communication)" (p.8).

According to Andersen and Andersen, as cited in Barker (1982), "...immediacy or intimacy behaviors are non-linguistic actions which send four simultaneous and complementary messages" (p.100). These are: messages of approach, for example a wave of the hand or a pat on the back; signals of social accessibility, such as establishing eye contact or moving closer to someone; increased sensory stimulation, such as touching; and communication of interpersonal closeness and warmth, as well as reduction of psychological distance (Andersen & Andersen, as cited in Barker, 1982).

Interactants displaying immediate as opposed to non-immediate messages or behavior are evaluated as more competent and evaluated more favorably (Manusov, 1991). Since immediate behaviors send a message of friendliness and liking, then immediate teachers can show students that they not only like them, but that it can be a mutually shared liking (Kearney, Plax, & Burroughs, 1991). The conclusion drawn is that "teachers who are able to verbally and nonverbally generate this positive affective relationship with their students also are likely to be in the enviable position of getting students to do homework, remain attentive to lectures, and other learning-related activities" (Kearney, et al., 1991, p.340). It would seem from this that high levels of immediacy are associated with active rather than passive learning styles, that effects may

vary due to individual students' styles of gathering and digesting information (Allen, et al., 1987).

But what are the effects of immediacy behaviors? Do they influence how students evaluate their teachers?

### Immediacy and Evaluations of Teacher and Course

Teacher immediacy and its effect on student learning has been researched extensively (Kelley & Gorham, 1988; Cazden, 1988; Gorham, 1988), with the majority of the research finding a significant relationship between immediacy and affective learning, or the students' feelings about the course and/or the instructor. Richmond, Gorham, and McCroskey (as cited in Allen, et al., 1987), say that "using students' subjective self-reports of...learning...(shows)... that the teacher's level of immediacy..will determine..the level of..affective learning generated" (p.9).

According to Nussbaum (1992), "..effective teacher behaviors are those in-class behaviors of the teacher that are related directly either to positive student outcomes or positive evaluations of teaching" (p.167).

Much of the research on teacher immediacy seems to be focused on the nonverbal aspects, and leads to the conclusion that immediacy does, in fact, increase a teacher's effectiveness. Some of the specific nonverbal immediacy items that have been looked at are: eye contact,

gestures, relaxed body posture, body position toward students, smiling, vocal expressiveness, movement, and proximity (Sanders & Wiseman, 1990, p.342).

The research indicates a positive relationship between teacher immediacy behaviors and student evaluation of the teacher. But do teacher immediacy behaviors also relate to positive evaluation of the course the teacher conducts?

When students rated their teachers as immediate, and perceived the communication between student and instructor as being satisfying, they "also reported a positive attitude toward the course content...the communication practices and behaviors recommended in the course...and the course instructor" (Prisbell, 1991, p.10).

#### Research Related to Immediacy

Communication behavior seems to be clearly linked to student learning and it is behavior teachers can directly control. Good teaching is each individual teacher adapting to continually changing situations (Bruschke & Gartner, 1991). Therefore, simply handing teachers a list of behaviors to try out is not logical. They must be forewarned that the use of these behaviors depends on many things, not the least of which is the contextual situation in their specific classroom (Nussbaum, 1992). Therefore it is not only critical to understand the variable of immediacy, but also that of intentionality and how it

relates to immediacy (Manusov, 1991). Gorham & Christophel (1990) suggest that to improve student learning outcomes:

...teachers consciously attempt to be vocally expressive, smile, have a relaxed body posture, gesture, move about the classroom, maintain eye contact, use humor and praise, indicate a willingness to engage in conversations outside of class, use personal examples or talk about experiences outside of class, encourage students to talk, and provide and ask for feedback (pp.46-47).

Since an overall goal of teaching is to create a desire to learn, not to force learning, adopting effective classroom management techniques may be the best way to enhance student learning (Bruschke & Gartner, 1991).

And, since there are varied opinions of what "good" teaching is, almost any definition can safely be used "...so long as it makes sense or seems logical" (Waxman & Walberg, 1991, p.64). What should be of concern then, is how effective teaching can be better defined and understood. Recent studies on such immediacy related areas as affinity-seeking, motivation to learn, and expressiveness can be of help in this endeavor.

### Affinity-Seeking

In some of the research dealing with teacher characteristics, affinity-seeking techniques were studied (McCroskey & Wheelless, 1976; McCroskey & McCroskey, 1986). Seven techniques are seen to increase a teacher's credibility in the classroom: controlling physical

appearance, increasing positive self-disclosure, stressing areas of positive similarity, providing positive reinforcement, expressing cooperation, complying with others' wishes, and fulfilling others' needs. Teachers who use any of these techniques are said to be more likeable, which is one of the effects of high immediacy as well (Frymier & Thompson, 1992). Another study (Richmond, 1990) set forth a list of 25 affinity-seeking techniques, plus suggestions for actual use in the classroom (see Appendix A). Richmond (1990) found similar results to the studies mentioned above, namely that the perceived use of immediacy behaviors and affinity-seeking behaviors are highly associated with affective learning, and that being able to motivate a student to learn by stimulating and maintaining his or her interest in the course can be a lasting effect of these behaviors.

### Student Motivation

As reported by Frymier (1993), Christophel in 1990 and Richmond in 1990, in 2 separate studies, introduced motivation to study "...as a possible mediating variable between teacher immediacy and student learning" (p.455).

Also in Frymiers' 1993 study, it is pointed out that one way people learn is through observation. Therefore, "...how a teacher behaves and communicates with students is thought to impact students' motivation in the classroom" (p.456).



But no two students will necessarily respond to a specific behavior in the same manner, be it an immediacy behavior or the instructor's use of humor during a lecture or discussion.

There seem to be some behaviors that do **not** promote positive outcomes. With affinity-seeking, the behaviors that have been shown to be anti-productive are: reward association, self-inclusion, and similarity. These behaviors imply that students and teachers should not attempt to become overly familiar with each other, possibly because it is an unnatural state, one with which neither side has had much experience (Frymier & Thompson, 1992).

The area of nonverbal immediacy behaviors that can improve teachers' effectiveness in the classroom is one that most teachers will initially show great interest in, however this interest tends to diminish with time unless teachers are given a list of ways to use these behaviors (Hall & Hall, 1988).

It is true that a teacher does not have to be liked by her/his students to be effective, but people tend to pay attention more often to those people and things they like than to ones they do not (Frymier & Thompson, 1992).

### Expressiveness

Previous research on student evaluations has also shown that teacher immediacy and **expressiveness** have a strong

influence on the ratings students give their teachers, and that it is sometimes more important than anything else, including lecture content (Basow & Silberg, 1987). But what does "expressiveness" mean? It can mean enthusiasm, humor, self-disclosure, and the use of storytelling. It can also mean an animated, attentive, open, dramatic, or relaxed communicator style (Potter & Emanuel, 1990). According to Kearney, et al., (1991), students reported that teachers they had rated as nonimmediate seemed unenthused about their jobs, and, therefore, seemed less competent than those they rated high in immediacy. These same students wanted teachers to become more aware of their own performances and actively work to improve their teaching skills.

According to Burgoon, et al., (1989), in a study of conversational involvement, one of the variables that distinguishes an immediate communicator from a nonimmediate one is the level of perceived involvement. And since greater involvement carries with it the positive meaning of immediacy, then decreased involvement will be more often associated with nonimmediacy. If this is the case, then more involvement in a conversation can increase credibility, no matter how that person was perceived at the beginning of the interaction (Burgoon, et al., 1989). Therefore, since teacher communicator style has been shown to be of significant influence, it would seem that teachers who wish to be evaluated as more credible by their students should remain aware of their levels of classroom conversational

involvement at all times.

But there are other variables that affect student preferences in the classroom. One of the most researched is that of gender.

### Gender

Numerous studies on gender and competence have provided results indicating that how competent a person is perceived to be is at least partly dependent on stereotypical characteristics based on the person's gender. Both males and females give more credit to men who achieve success than to women who achieve the same level of success. Men are said to have talent or good judgement, while women have intuition or luck. This gender prejudice carries over into the academic world, where women faculty are evaluated lower than men, are considered unfeminine if they show any signs of strength, and are often addressed as "Miss", "Mrs.", or anything but "Dr." or "Professor" (Sandler, 1991).

In most college or university classrooms it is common to see instructors walk into the room and immediately position themselves at a podium to begin the class. But, according to Mayo & Henley (1981), this visual cue performed by a female teacher is not as effective as when performed by a male teacher.

All of this could be based on the myth of sex-role

stereotypes. But is it a myth? Research has proven that it is not. Rather, it is a pervasive cultural problem that continually influences our conscious, and unconscious, judgements of specific men and women. It is a perceptual bias in which people are more likely to see what they already believe based on their early learned stereotypes. And these stereotypes produce discriminatory behavior (Mayo & Henley, 1981).

And if women teachers are being perceived differently than their male colleagues, no matter how unfair it may be, then the students' evaluations of the teacher and course may be affected by these biased views as well.

But does gender also alter a students' view of immediacy? Do they judge immediacy behaviors equally when used by both male and female teachers? Are male and female teachers perceived differently by their students when using immediate behaviors?

### Gender and Immediacy

Women faculty may feel pressured to fulfill the expectation of their colleagues to always act in feminine ways, so that being aggressive or firm is given a bad connotation by society, and blame for this departure from "normal" feminine behavior may be based only on the fact that she is a woman (Estes, 1989). The controlling behavior

necessary for teachers may be a further departure from acceptable social behavior for women, especially if we accept the view that dominant signals given by women are taken less seriously than the same signals given by men (Neill, 1991). And according to Sandler (1991):

Both male and female students have gender-related expectations for their professors... they may expect women to be more personal and more supportive and motherly than their male teachers. They may put more pressure on women faculty for special treatment...and be more angry at a female professor who refuses such... treatment than a male professor acting in the same way (p.7).

Thus, women faculty are often caught in a double bind: no matter how they act their behavior is never right. And this can cause students to evaluate them differently.

### Gender and Evaluations

It has been shown by previous research that teachers using a more immediate communication style are evaluated higher by students than those who are less immediate (Bruschke & Gartner, 1991). But does the teachers' gender influence those ratings?

Bennett (cited in Sandler, 1991) states that "...women are scrutinized more and there are higher standards for women faculty than for men" (p.9). And what a woman teacher wears becomes a variable in evaluations of her teaching ability, whereas that is not a consideration when students judge a male teacher (Sandler, 1991).

Bennett (cited in Brusckhe and Gartner, 1991) also determined that "...female instructors were perceived as more warm than male instructors but were judged more critically than male instructors in terms of providing warmth" (p.211). Some signals may have the same effect no matter which gender uses them, but some definitely do not. One of these is smiling. The greater tendency of women to smile is not only regarded as an affiliative signal by others, but also as a submissive signal. Men smile less, and their smiles are taken more seriously, considered to have greater information value (Neill, 1991).

According to Brusckhe and Gartner (1991), "...students expect female teachers to excel both in traditionally masculine or competence areas as well as in traditionally female or warmth domains...given that female teachers appear to face a more stringent set of criteria, it is not surprising that they receive lower overall ratings" (p.211). Yet even with lower ratings than their male colleagues, the females in this study were still perceived as effective teachers (Brusckhe & Gartner, 1991).

The effects of sex on ratings of college professors is an issue that only recently has been explored, and an issue that has generated some inconsistent research results.

Another issue that needs more attention is that of student gender and how it may impact on their evaluations of their teachers and courses.

Does a student's gender influence his or her perceptions

of an instructor's unique teaching style?

### Student Gender

It has been shown (Lloyd & Duveen, 1992) that males and females are socialized differently, from the time they can differentiate the separation of the sexes, all through grade school and puberty. Their gender-identities, then, could have an influence on their classroom life, and combined with individual personalities and preferences, should have an impact on the way they view their instructors' teaching styles. Some evidence exists to support the statement that there are gender differences when students rate instructors (Potter & Emanuel, 1990). For instance, female students tend to rate male instructors more highly than female instructors.

### Other Variables Influencing Student Evaluations

There are other considerations facing teachers in the classroom. For instance, a teacher must adjust her/his communicator style for different age groups of students. Which may mean that an effective teacher's style is constantly changing due to the natural process of his/her own aging, and also due to the age of the students (Sallinen-Kuparinen, 1992).

Class size, the actual number of students in a particular class, can alter a teacher's ability to use certain behaviors as well. According to Gorham (1988):

Eye contact, smiling and vocal expressiveness are important teacher behaviors regardless of class size, whereas gesturing, smiling at individual students, relaxed body position, and movement around the classroom become more important factors as class size increases (p.51).

So, with the approach of the 21st century, and with diversity in the classroom growing, there is a need to become more aware of these basic differences and how they influence student perceptions. Since so much is dependent on the context in which students are taught, even the students' background may become a prime concern. Therefore, the teacher must work very hard to recognize that patterns of interaction may not be the same for males and females, different age groups, or different cultures, and the teacher must become aware of the patterns with which students most easily identify (Bowers & Flinders, 1991).



## Statement of Purpose

There has been much written on the subject of teacher immediacy. But the relationships among the issues of perceived teacher immediacy, teacher/student gender, and student evaluations of course and/or teachers, need to be examined further.

In light of this, the present study addresses the following research questions:

**R<sub>1</sub>: Is there a relationship between student perceptions of teacher immediacy behaviors and student evaluations of the course and/or teacher?**

**R<sub>2</sub>: Does teacher and/or student gender influence:**

**R<sub>2A</sub>: Students' perceptions of teacher immediacy?**

**R<sub>2B</sub>: Students' evaluations of course and/or teacher?**

## Chapter 2

### Methodology

The primary purpose of this research is to gain insight into the issue of teacher immediacy in the college classroom by investigating the immediacy level of instructors in a variety of courses, student evaluations of the course and/or instructor, and gender of student and/or teacher.

#### Participants

Respondents in the study were undergraduate and graduate students enrolled at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Respondents participated in the study while enrolled in various communication classes at the University.

#### Procedure

At the end of the Spring 1994 semester, questionnaires (see Appendix B) were distributed to students during class periods. These class periods were agreed upon before hand by the researcher and the class instructors. The respondents were asked to think back to the class immediately **before** the one in which they were filling out the questionnaire, and use **that** class and instructor in formulating their responses. 197 instruments were handed out, completed, and returned to the researcher.

## Measurement of Variables

### Immediacy

To discover participants' perceptions of their instructors' level of immediacy, the **Behavioral Indicators of Immediacy Scale (BII)** (Andersen, 1978) was included in the questionnaire (questions 1-15 of Appendix B), with one item added by the researcher (question 16 of Appendix B) in order to give each item an opposite on the instrument. Responses were on a seven point Likert-type scale ranging from highly disagree to highly agree. In the original study by Andersen (1978), the **BII** was found to contain one factor and to be a reliable instrument (Alpha = .91 for time one and .93 for time two).

### Evaluation

To discover how the student evaluated the course and/or instructor, several items (questions 17-28 of Appendix B), adapted from **TABS (Teaching Analysis By Students)**, developed by the Clinic to Improve University Teaching, School of Education, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, allowed students to rate the relevance of the course to their future lives, how much they felt they learned in the course, how they felt about the organization of the course, how valuable

they felt the assigned readings (if any) were, the instructor's ability to ask questions, the instructor's effectiveness as a discussion leader, the instructor's ability to use a variety of teaching techniques, the instructor's day-to-day management skills, the instructor's ability to relate to people and promote mutual respect, the instructor's willingness to explore various points of view, the course, and the teaching of the course.

In addition, demographic questions concerning student and teacher gender, and student age were asked.

### Statistical Analysis

When all the instruments had been completed and returned, the data were coded, entered into computer files and analyzed using SPSS-X. Descriptive statistics were computed for immediacy, course, and teacher evaluation items. A factor analysis, and internal reliability analysis, of the **BII** questionnaire was done, as well as factor analyses for course and teacher evaluation items; t-tests and one-way analyses of variance (ANOVA) were used to test for differences based on demographic variables.

The alpha level for all significance tests was set at .05. For research question 1, **Is there a relationship between student perceptions of teacher immediacy behaviors and student evaluations of the course and/or teacher?** the modified **BII scale** was the predictor variable, while the two

affect variables (course and teacher evaluations) acted as criterion variables. Pearson product moment correlations were used to determine if there were any linear relationships between the immediacy score and either the course or teacher evaluation scores.

And for research question 2, **Does teacher and/or student gender influence: R<sub>2A</sub>: Students' perceptions of teacher immediacy? R<sub>2B</sub>: Students' evaluations of course and/or teacher?** both teacher and student gender were the predictor variables, while immediacy and course/teacher evaluative scores became the criterion variables. One-way ANOVAs and t-tests were used to determine if there were differences in immediacy and course/teacher evaluative scores based on teacher and/or student gender.

## Chapter 3

### Results

The first research question concerned the relationship between student perceptions of teacher immediacy behaviors and student evaluations of the course and/or teacher, and the second considered the influence, if any, teacher and/or student gender may have on student perceptions of teacher immediacy and evaluations of the course and/or teacher.

#### Normative Data

Ninety-five percent of the respondents in this study were undergraduate students with a mean age of 19.4. For purposes of computing, the ages of the respondents were grouped into 6 categories: 18-22, 23-26, 27-30, 31-36, 37-40, and 41 years and older. There were 105 females and 92 males.

Questionnaire item means and standard deviations are presented in Table 1. Scores indicate that teachers were rated overall as higher than average on immediacy items, the course items were generally rated slightly above good, and the teaching items were also rated as slightly above good.

Item response distributions are presented in Table 2, with the majority of respondents rating all immediacy items on a positive level, all course evaluation items on a positive level, and all teacher evaluation items positively as well.

**Table 1**  
**Means and Standard Deviations**  
**for All Items**

	Mean	SD
<b>Immediacy</b>		
Q1..more eye contact	4.37	1.92
Q2..more tense	2.83	1.83
Q3..gestures more	4.31	1.91
Q4..more movement	4.23	1.96
Q5..more relaxed	4.69	1.82
Q6..body more toward	4.49	1.79
Q7..smiles more	4.38	1.88
Q8..more expressive	4.59	1.91
Q9..less eye contact	2.76	1.70
Q10..less tense body	4.36	1.90
Q11..gestures less	3.11	1.72
Q12..less movement	3.16	1.72
Q13..less relaxed body	2.93	1.74
Q14..body less toward	2.98	1.68
Q15..smiles less	3.06	1.84
Q16..less expressive	2.90	1.77
<b>Course</b>		
Q17..this course was	1.69	.80
Q18..I learned	1.72	.76
Q19..course structure*	2.41	.86
Q20..valuable readings	2.05	.89
Q27..rate this course	1.90	.82
<b>Teaching</b>		
Q21..ask questions	2.09	.90
Q22..discussion leader	2.01	.93
Q23..techniques	2.16	.94
Q24..management	1.98	.77
Q25..mutual respect	1.90	.91
Q26..points of view	1.88	.83
Q28..rate the teaching	1.96	.90

Immediacy items were scored on a seven point Likert-type scale ranging from 1=strongly disagree, to 7=strongly agree. \*Question 19 had three responses (1=more structured; 2=less structured; 3=maintain present level), while 17, 18, 20-28 gave the respondent four choices (1=excellent; 2=good; 3=mediocre; 4=poor).

Table 2

Frequencies and Percents  
For All Items (Immediacy,  
Course and Teacher)

	Responses											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7					
Q1	Fq 17	% 8.6	Fq 14	% 7.1	Fq 27	% 13.7	Fq 35	% 17.8	Fq 45	% 22.8	Fq 26	% 13.2
Q2	Fq 55	% 27.9	Fq 63	% 32.0	Fq 14	% 7.1	Fq 28	% 14.2	Fq 10	% 5.1	Fq 17	% 8.6
Q3	Fq 15	% 7.6	Fq 36	% 18.3	Fq 19	% 9.6	Fq 24	% 12.2	Fq 34	% 17.3	Fq 44	% 22.3
Q4	Fq 16	% 8.1	Fq 43	% 21.8	Fq 15	% 7.6	Fq 23	% 11.7	Fq 34	% 17.3	Fq 40	% 20.3
Q5	Fq 11	% 5.6	Fq 24	% 12.2	Fq 18	% 9.1	Fq 27	% 13.7	Fq 30	% 15.2	Fq 57	% 28.9
Q6	Fq 11	% 5.6	Fq 32	% 16.2	Fq 10	% 5.1	Fq 33	% 16.8	Fq 44	% 22.3	Fq 42	% 21.3
Q7	Fq 15	% 7.6	Fq 25	% 12.7	Fq 30	% 15.2	Fq 26	% 13.2	Fq 33	% 16.8	Fq 38	% 19.3
Q8	Fq 11	% 5.6	Fq 34	% 17.3	Fq 18	% 9.1	Fq 14	% 7.1	Fq 38	% 19.3	Fq 49	% 24.9
Q9	Fq 46	% 23.4	Fq 77	% 39.1	Fq 15	% 7.6	Fq 24	% 12.2	Fq 14	% 7.1	Fq 15	% 7.6
Q10	Fq 11	% 5.6	Fq 41	% 20.8	Fq 18	% 9.1	Fq 24	% 12.2	Fq 28	% 14.2	Fq 50	% 25.4
Q11	Fq 30	% 15.2	Fq 69	% 35.0	Fq 30	% 15.2	Fq 21	% 10.7	Fq 18	% 9.1	Fq 23	% 11.7
Q12	Fq 30	% 15.2	Fq 61	% 31.0	Fq 36	% 18.3	Fq 24	% 12.2	Fq 16	% 8.1	Fq 23	% 11.7
Q13	Fq 38	% 19.3	Fq 75	% 38.1	Fq 21	% 10.7	Fq 23	% 11.7	Fq 13	% 6.6	Fq 20	% 10.2
Q14	Fq 39	% 19.8	Fq 64	% 32.5	Fq 26	% 13.2	Fq 25	% 12.7	Fq 21	% 10.7	Fq 18	% 9.1
Q15	Fq 40	% 20.3	Fq 67	% 34.0	Fq 21	% 10.7	Fq 19	% 9.6	Fq 21	% 10.7	Fq 19	% 9.6
Q16	Fq 45	% 22.8	Fq 66	% 33.5	Fq 25	% 12.7	Fq 21	% 10.7	Fq 10	% 5.1	Fq 24	% 12.2
#Q17	Fq 96	% 48.7	Fq 73	% 37.1	Fq 21	% 10.7	Fq 7	% 3.6				
#Q18	Fq 87	% 44.2	Fq 82	% 41.6	Fq 24	% 12.2	Fq 4	% 2.0				
#Q19	Fq 48	% 24.4	Fq 21	% 10.7	Fq 128	% 65.0						
#Q20	Fq 59	% 29.9	Fq 85	% 43.1	Fq 38	% 19.3	Fq 15	% 7.6				
*Q21	Fq 52	% 26.4	Fq 92	% 46.7	Fq 34	% 17.3	Fq 19	% 9.6				
*Q22	Fq 67	% 34.0	Fq 78	% 39.6	Fq 34	% 17.3	Fq 18	% 9.1				
*Q23	Fq 51	% 25.9	Fq 84	% 42.6	Fq 39	% 19.8	Fq 23	% 11.7				
*Q24	Fq 52	% 26.4	Fq 106	% 53.8	Fq 31	% 15.7	Fq 8	% 4.1				
*Q25	Fq 78	% 39.6	Fq 73	% 37.1	Fq 33	% 16.8	Fq 13	% 6.6				
*Q26	Fq 71	% 36.0	Fq 86	% 43.7	Fq 30	% 15.2	Fq 10	% 5.1				
#Q27	Fq 67	% 34.0	Fq 92	% 46.7	Fq 28	% 14.2	Fq 10	% 5.1				
*Q28	Fq 72	% 36.5	Fq 71	% 36.0	Fq 43	% 21.8	Fq 11	% 5.6				

n=197. **Note:** Items 1-16 (immediacy) had seven responses, ranging from 1-strongly disagree to 7-strongly agree. Items 17, 18, and 20-28 had four responses (1=excellent; 2=good; 3=mediocre; 4=poor). Item 19 had three responses (1=be more structured; 2=be less structured; 3=maintain present level). \*=teacher evaluation items. #=course evaluation items.



## Linear Relationships between Individual Questionnaire Items

Pearson correlations between individual immediacy behaviors and course evaluation items are presented in Table 3; between individual immediacy behaviors and teacher evaluation items are presented in Table 4.

Three scale scores were computed by calculating for each subject the mean of the 16 immediacy items, the mean of the five course items, and the mean of the seven teacher items. The resulting scales are labeled Immediacy, Course Evaluation, and Teacher Evaluation respectively and are significantly correlated with each other (see Table 5).

## Factor Analyses and Reliability of Instruments

To determine if immediacy ratings, course ratings, and teacher ratings were each measuring unified constructs, the set of 16 immediacy items (1-16), the set of five course items (17-20, 27), and the set of seven teacher items (21-26, 28), were each subjected to factor analysis with varimax rotation. The factor pattern for course evaluation items produced a one-factor solution as did the factor pattern for teacher evaluation items (see Table 6), confirming the presence of empirically distinct factors.

If the single factor structure of the BII reported in the

**Table 3**  
**Correlations Between Immediacy Behaviors**  
**and Course Evaluation Items**

	17	18	19	20	27
engages in more eye contact	-.15*	-.23**	-.18*	-.04	-.34**
more tense body position	.09	.21**	-.17*	-.11	.28**
gestures more while teaching	-.10	-.17*	.25**	.00	-.24**
engages in more movement	-.06	-.06	.22**	-.00	-.29**
more relaxed body position	-.15*	-.22**	.24**	.02	-.31**
body position more toward	-.08	-.19**	.28**	-.00	-.33**
smiles more	-.16*	-.29**	.34**	-.00	-.46**
more vocally expressive	-.12	-.18*	.36**	.02	-.35**
less eye contact	.13	.26**	-.24**	-.05	.32**
less tense body position	-.05	-.09	.15	.05	-.24**
gestures less	.05	.29**	-.29**	-.01	.30**
engages in less movement	-.04	.15*	-.29**	-.07	.28**
less relaxed body position	.01	.12	-.19**	-.09	.23**
body position less toward	.01	.18*	-.23**	-.05	.26**
smiles less	.09	.25**	-.31**	-.05	.35**
less vocally expressive	.04	.19**	-.30**	-.01	.29**

\*Significance level .05 \*\*Significance level .01 (2-tailed).

**Table 4**  
**Correlations Between Immediacy Behaviors**  
**and Teacher Evaluation Items**

	21	22	23	24	25	26	28
more eye contact	-.31**	-.30**	-.32**	-.27**	-.39**	-.31**	-.35**
more tense body position	.24**	.32**	.34**	.21**	.31**	.33**	.32**
gestures more	-.26**	-.27**	-.27**	-.20**	-.28**	-.18**	-.34**
engages in more movement	-.26**	-.32**	-.30**	-.19**	-.26**	-.20**	-.38**
more relaxed body	-.23**	-.29**	-.29**	-.21**	-.30**	-.24**	-.33**
body position more toward	-.27**	-.33**	-.33**	-.21**	-.36**	-.25**	-.41**
smiles more	-.35**	-.44**	-.45**	-.31**	-.42**	-.45**	-.50**
more vocally expressive	-.38**	-.34**	-.41**	-.33**	-.34**	-.25**	-.44**
less eye contact	.39**	.38**	.34**	.31**	.38**	.35**	.39**
less tense body position	-.24**	-.21**	-.27**	-.20**	-.30**	-.23**	-.29**
gestures less	.31**	.40**	.39**	.30**	.39**	.24**	.39**
engages in less movement	.32**	.37**	.35**	.28**	.34**	.22**	.41**
less relaxed body	.20**	.31**	.26**	.21**	.28**	.22**	.30**
body position less toward	.28**	.31**	.34**	.26**	.30**	.26**	.32**
smiles less	.28**	.39**	.30**	.28**	.38**	.26**	.41**
less vocally expressive	.32**	.36**	.33**	.32**	.31**	.18**	.36**

**Table 5**  
**Pearson Correlation**  
**Coefficients for Immediacy,**  
**Course, and Teacher Evaluation**  
**Scores**

	Immediacy	Course Evaluation	Teacher Evaluation
Immediacy	1.0	-.37**	-.60**
Course	-.37**	1.0	.70**
Teacher	-.60**	.70**	1.0

\*p=.05    \*\*p=.01 (2-tailed) for Tables 4 and 5.

original study done by Andersen (1978) is assumed, this study's results produced an alpha level of .83. And both Course Evaluation and Teacher Evaluation items were found to be reliable at the .73 and .91 levels, respectively.

The BII has been reported as a single item instrument to attain a summed score. However, when the 16 immediacy items were subjected to factor analysis in the present study, four factors (expression, movement, body position, and eye contact) were found (see Table 7), each a distinct category of behaviors, with reliability levels of .84, .80, .84, and .86 respectively.

When a Pearson Correlation was performed on the overall immediacy, course, teacher evaluation scores and the immediacy sub-scales (see Table 8), significant correlations were found between each combination.

#### Student/Teacher Gender Differences

Results of t-tests comparing individual questionnaire items by student gender (see Table 9) revealed differences in two items (6, 14) significant at the .05 level, while there were several other items that came close to being significantly different (3, 4, 5 & 27). These items were immediacy items except for item 27, which is the overall course rating question.

There were no differences found between the means of female and male students' scores for all three scales

**Table 6**  
**Factor Loadings for Teacher**  
**and Course Evaluation Items**

Variable	Factor Loading	Eigenvalue	Percent of Variance
<b>Teacher</b>			
Q21 ..questions	.83	4.87	69.5
Q28 ..rate teaching	.91		
Q22 ..discussion leader	.88		
Q23 ..variety of techniques	.86		
Q25 ..mutual respect	.81		
Q26 ..points of view	.80		
Q24 ..administrative	.74		
<b>Course</b>			
Q17 ..this course was	.53	2.38	47.5
Q27 ..rate this course	.85		
Q18 ..I learned	.84		
Q19 ..course structure*	.67		
Q20 ..valuable readings	.47		

\*Item 19 was reversed (1=3, 3=1).

**Table 7**  
**Factor Loadings for Immediacy**  
**Items (1-16)**

	<u>Factors</u>				Eigen- values	% of Var
	I	II	III Body position	IV Eye contact		
1 more eye				.79	6.45	40.3
2 more tense	.36		-.70		1.80	11.1
3 gestures more		.86			1.4	8.4
4 more move		.82			1.2	7.2
12 less move	.81	-.44				
16 less express.	.74					
11 gesture less.	.72	-.47				
15 smiles less	.69			-.35		
13 less relaxed.	.61		-.52			
14 less toward	.57			-.36		
8 more express		.61				
10 less tense body			.82			
5 more relaxed			.72			
9 less eye	.44			-.72		
6 more toward		.46		.56		
7 smiles more	-.36	.30		.49		

Table 8

**Pearson Correlation Coefficients  
between Immediacy, Course, and  
Teacher Evaluation Scores and  
Immediacy Sub-scales**

	<b>Expression</b>	<b>Movement</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Eye Contact</b>
Immediacy	.9227**	.8963**	.7482**	.8830**
Course	-.3296**	-.3474**	-.2321**	.3818**
Teacher	-.5540**	-.5336**	-.4150**	.5749**

\*Significance level .05 \*\*Significance level .01 (2-tailed).

Table 9

**Questionnaire Items by Student Gender  
(n=197)**

Variable	N		Mean		t Value	2-tailed p
	Grp 1	Grp 2	Grp 1	Grp 2		
Q3...gestures more	105	91	4.09	4.58	-1.08	.07
Q4...more movement			4.00	4.49	-1.77	.08
Q5...more relaxed body			4.47	4.95	-1.90	.06
Q6...body toward			4.22	4.81	-2.35	.02*
Q14..body less toward			3.17	2.71	1.94	.05*
Q27..rate this course			2.00	1.80	1.79	.07

\*Significant at p .05. Grp 1=Female students Grp 2=male students.

(Immediacy, Course Evaluation, and Teacher Evaluation) (see Table 10). There were no differences found when Immediacy scores were grouped by gender of instructor (see Table 10). However, there **were** differences found when Teacher Evaluation and Course Evaluation scores were grouped by instructor's gender - female instructors and the courses taught by female instructors were rated more positively than their male counterparts (see Table 10).

An ANOVA was performed to test for differences by gender combinations of student and teacher (i.e. female student/female teacher, female student/male teacher, male student/female teacher, male student/male teacher) The results (see Table 11) show that there were no differences for immediacy or teacher evaluation scores, but there was a significant difference for the course evaluation score at the  $p < .05$  level. The female student/male teacher group differed significantly with all other pairings by gender. Female students having male teachers in this sample rated the Course Evaluation lower overall than did the other groups.

And when a one-way ANOVA was performed with the same gender groups and the immediacy sub-scales (see Table 12) the female students with male teachers again differed from all other groupings by rating these teachers lower overall in the 'movement' category.

In Table 13 we see that female teachers were rated higher overall in all sub-categories of immediacy.

**Table 10**  
**Results of t-tests by**  
**Gender**

Item	N	Mean	Value of t	2-tailed p
<b>M1 (Immediacy)</b>				
Female Student	105	4.6	-1.47	.144
Male Student	91	4.9		
-----				
Female Teacher	92	4.9	1.76	.079
Male Teacher	104	4.6		
<b>M2 (Course Eval*)</b>				
Female Student		1.8	1.42	.157
Male Student		1.7		
-----				
Female Teacher		1.7	-2.38	.019
Male Teacher		1.9		
<b>M3 (Teacher Eval*)</b>				
Female Student		2.0	.74	.460
Male Student		2.0		
-----				
Female Teacher		1.9	-2.36	.019
Male Teacher		2.1		

**\*Note:** Lower scores indicate more positive evaluations. Scale for immediacy items: 1=strongly disagree; 2=disagree; 3=moderately disagree; 4=are undecided; 5=moderately agree; 6=agree; 7= strongly agree. t-values for teacher gender and course and teacher evaluation scores were significant at -2.35 and -2.34 respectively, with a probability level of .02 (2-tailed).



Table 11

**One-way Analysis of Variance and  
Student-Newman-Keuls Procedure  
for Course Evaluation Score  
by Gender Groups**

<u>Immediacy</u>				
Source	df	MS	F	P
Between Groups	3	2.6990	2.1235	.0986
Within Groups	192	1.2710		
Total	195			

<u>Teacher Evaluation</u>				
Source	df	MS	F	P
Between Groups	3	1.1390	2.1288	.0979
Within Groups	192	.5351		
Total	195			

<u>Course Evaluation</u>				
Source	df	MS	F	P
Between Groups	3	.9786	3.2660	.0225
Within Groups	192	.2996		
Total	195			

Newman-Keuls Procedure for Course Evaluation:  
Grouped according to gender-pairs (Student/Teacher).

Group	F/F*
Mean <sub>a</sub>	1.7019

Group	F/M
Mean <sub>b</sub>	1.9885

Group	M/F*
Mean <sub>c</sub>	1.6821

Group	M/M*
Mean <sub>d</sub>	1.7692

\*Groups with common sub-scripts were not significantly different at the .05 level.

**Table 12**  
**One-Way Analysis of Variance**  
**and Student-Newman-Keuls**  
**Procedure for Immediacy Sub-**  
**Scales by Gender Groups**

<u>Expression</u> Source	df	MS	F	P
Between Groups	3	2.1187	1.3848	.2487
Within Groups	192	1.5300		
Total	195			

<u>Movement</u> Source	df	MS	F	P
Between Groups	3	5.2769	3.0253	.0308
Within Groups	192	1.7443		
Total	195			

Newman-Keuls Procedure for Sub-scale "Movement": Grouped according to gender pairs (Student/Teacher).

Group	F/F*
Mean <sub>a</sub>	4.6846
Group	F/M
Mean <sub>b</sub>	4.0824
Group	M/F*
Mean <sub>c</sub>	4.8315
Group	M/M*
Mean <sub>d</sub>	4.6401

\*Groups with common sub-scripts were not significantly different at the .05 level.

<u>Position</u> Source	df	MS	F	P
Between Groups	3	.6389	.3230	.8087
Within Groups	192	1.9780		
Total	195			

<u>Eye Contact</u> Source	df	MS	F	P
Between Groups	3	3.6884	2.3079	.0779
Within Groups	192	1.5982		
Total	195			

**Table 13**  
**Results of t-tests by**  
**Immediacy Sub-Scales and Gender**

Item	N	Mean	Value of t	2-tailed p
<b>M1(Expression)</b>				
Female Student	105	4.9		
Male Student	91	5.0	.68	.498
-----				
Female Teacher	92	5.1		
Male Teacher	104	4.8	1.68	.095
<b>M2(Movement)</b>				
Female Student		4.4		
Male Student		4.7	1.76	.080
-----				
Female Teacher		4.7		
Male Teacher		4.4	2.02	.044
<b>M3(Position)</b>				
Female Student		4.8		
Male Student		4.9	.54	.587
-----				
Female Teacher		4.9		
Male Teacher		4.8	.64	.525
<b>M4(Eye Contact)</b>				
Female Student		4.6		
Male Student		4.9	1.71	.089
-----				
Female Teacher		4.9		
Male Teacher		4.6	1.79	.074

## Chapter 4

### Discussion

The first objective of this study was to test for potential relationships between a teacher's use of immediacy in the college classroom, and the evaluations students give the course and teacher. A second objective was to discover a link, if any, between gender and these relationships. Review of literature revealed previous studies which identified immediacy behaviors such as friendliness, enthusiasm, and expressiveness that seem to effect student liking of courses and teachers. The instrument used in this study, although limited, did have teacher evaluation items that tapped the instructor delivery or presentation dimension of classroom communication, while the course quality items tapped a content substance dimension.

Results of this study provide the answer, **yes**, to the first research question: **Is there a relationship between student perceptions of teacher immediacy and student evaluations of the course and/or teacher?**

The second research question, **Does teacher and/or student gender influence: R<sup>2</sup><sub>A</sub> Students' perceptions of teacher immediacy? R<sup>2</sup><sub>B</sub> Students' evaluations of the course and/or teacher** is also answered in the affirmative, but to an extent and in a manner that was unexpected, as will be explained.

### Normative Data

All immediacy, course, and teacher evaluation item means exceed, in a positive direction, the theoretical midpoint of each response scale.

Distribution highlights of the most positive items are as follows: 15.2 percent of respondents strongly agreed with, 28.9 percent agreed with, and 15.2 percent moderately agreed with immediacy item #5 (This instructor has a more relaxed body position while teaching than most other instructors), while 19.3 percent strongly disagreed with, 38.1 percent disagreed with, and 10.7 percent moderately disagreed with item #13 (This instructor has a less relaxed body position while teaching than most other instructors) adding up to 68.1 percent of respondents. 12.7 percent strongly agreed with, 21.3 percent agreed with, and 22.3 percent moderately agreed with item #6 (This instructor directs her/his body position more toward students while teaching than most other instructors), while 19.8 percent strongly agreed with, 32.5 percent disagreed with, and 13.2 percent moderately disagreed with item #14 (This instructor directs her/his body position less toward the students while teaching than most other instructors). Expressiveness also achieved one of the higher ratings for immediacy items, with 16.8 percent strongly agreeing, 24.9 percent agreeing, and 19.3 percent moderately agreeing with item #8 (This instructor is more vocally expressive while teaching than most other

instructors).

For the course items, item #17 (In terms of the direction my life is taking this course was...) had 48.7 percent giving it a rating of excellent, and 37.1 percent a rating of good. 44.2 percent of respondents, and 41.6 percent of respondents gave ratings of a great deal or a fair amount, respectively, to item #18 (In the course I learned...). And item #27 (Overall, I would rate this course as...) had 34 percent rating it as excellent, and 46.7 percent rating it as good.

The teacher evaluation items revealed some highly positive means as well, with item #25 ( The instructor's ability to relate to people in ways that promoted mutual respect was...) having 39.6 percent rating it excellent, and 37.1 percent rating it good. 36 percent said the instructor's willingness to explore a variety of points of view (item #26) was excellent, while 43.7 percent felt it was good. And finally, item #28 (Overall, I would rate the teaching of the course as...) had 36.5 percent rating it as excellent, and 36 percent as good.

In this study the students found the teachers generally relaxed, able to accept varied points of view, respectful of others, and expressive. Students felt they had immediate instructors, and these instructors' teaching abilities and the courses themselves were viewed positively.

Linear Relationships between Individual  
Questionnaire Items

Pearson Correlations between sets of the three scale scores (immediacy, course, and teacher) showed significant relationships. Immediacy was related to course ( $r=.37$ ) and to teacher ( $r=.60$ ). Course and teacher were correlated ( $r=.70$ ). These correlations suggest that teacher immediacy affects not only the students' personal feelings toward their instructors, but, maybe more importantly, their feelings toward the course taught by that instructor, and their desire and ability to learn in the classroom, no matter what the subject matter.

Course item #27 (Overall, I would rate this course as...) was correlated with **all** immediacy items, while items 18 and 19 (In the course I learned..; **and**, I would have preferred that the course...) correlated with most immediacy items. Item #17 (In terms of the direction my life is taking, this course was...) correlated with only three immediacy items, and item #20 (Generally, how valuable did you find the assigned readings..) with none.

Also, **all** teacher evaluation items correlated with **all** immediacy items.

Factor Analyses and Reliability  
of Instruments

Factor analysis with varimax rotation of the 16 immediacy items resulted in four factors labeled **expression, movement, body position, and eye contact**. This result is contrary to the single factor solution reported in the original study by Andersen (1978). Possible reasons for this discrepancy may be related to differences in samples. In addition, the 17 years since Andersen's study have seen many societal changes that have impacted classroom management, perceptions of the role of teachers, etc.

The present study, having established the reliability of immediacy (.83), course (.73), and teacher (.91) evaluation scales, also found the four immediacy subscales mentioned above to be reliable at .84, .80, .84, and .86 respectively, and correlated with both course and teacher evaluation scores.

But questions have been raised by these findings, most notably, is the BII a valid test of immediacy? The results of the present study suggest it may not be. Though the reliability results for the BII obtained in the present study are acceptable (i.e. > .80) the fact that four factors emerged, when Andersen in 1978 claimed only one factor, suggests that the issues underlying the BII may be perceived differently than they were in 1978.



### Student/Teacher Gender Differences

In this study, female students generally rated their instructors less positively than did their male counterparts on such immediacy items as gesturing, movement around the classroom, and body position. However, there was a tendency (but not significant) for the female students to rate the course more positively than the male students.

Although the overall ratings given for each scale (Immediacy, Course Evaluation, and Teacher Evaluation) were not significantly different for male and female students, there was an unexpected discovery when responses were grouped by teacher gender: **both male and female students rated their female instructors AND the courses they taught higher than male instructors and their classes.** This is contrary to earlier studies dealing with teacher gender and evaluations. In addition, when student/teacher gender groups were analyzed, **course ratings by female students having male teachers were significantly lower ( $p < .05$ ) than any other group,** yet another departure from earlier findings.

Students today have been exposed to a large amount of information on gender issues, information of which earlier students were only peripherally aware. Perhaps our search for gender equality in recent years has had an effect on the perceptions of both male and female students regarding their instructors behaviors, leading to the findings of the

present study.

In summary, this study has found that teachers rated higher in certain immediacy behaviors, such as eye contact, smiling, body position, relaxed body, expressiveness, and movement around the classroom, were more positively evaluated by their students than those rated lower. These teachers courses were evaluated more positively as well.

And, in addition, student/teacher gender has a direct bearing on student evaluations of the teacher and course.

## Chapter 5

### Conclusion

The results of this study point to the fact that there is a definite relationship between teacher immediacy behaviors, teacher and student gender, and student evaluations of the course and teacher.

The present study used already existing instruments as the responsive questionnaires filled out by its participants. When the scores for each respective instrument were analyzed, the results suggest that teachers who use more immediate behaviors in the classroom, behaviors that indicate interest in and respect for the students, are more likely to receive higher evaluations from those students.

All participants used their **previous** class as the basis for their responses, yielding a wide range of instructors as well as types of courses evaluated. Overall, both females and males judged their courses higher when they had a more immediate teacher. But male instructors of female students received the lowest ratings overall, a strong departure from all previous studies done on this subject.

One hundred percent of the instruments were completed and returned to the researcher. Analysis showed that high teacher immediacy is positively related to student liking of that teacher and the course that he or she taught.

Application of this research to teachers in the classroom

should center on the immediacy behaviors that are most highly correlated with positive evaluations of the teaching of the course. As was reported in the review of literature, one way people learn is through observation (Frymier, 1993) and, because people tend to pay attention more to people and things they like (Frymier & Thompson, 1992), the way teachers behave toward their students is thought to affect student motivation to learn in the course. It is therefore reasonable to assume that an awareness of the extent of immediacy behaviors should never be far from the thoughts of educators in all fields.

### Limitations

One of the major limitations of this study was also one of its strengths - - namely, the sampling techniques. The survey was conducted the last two weeks of a semester using students who reported on perceptions of instructors and courses which preceded the class in which they completed the questionnaire. Thus, a broad, random sample of instructors and courses was obtained, but detailed information on any given instructor or course could not be obtained.

It was mentioned earlier that a discrepancy was found between the factor analysis findings concerning the BII scale in Andersen's 1978 study and those of the current study. One possible reason for this discrepancy could be that students have become more aware of exactly what

immediacy is. They may also have had a wider variety of teachers and teaching methods in their school experiences than did students surveyed in the earlier studies. In the past, it was the norm for an instructor to remain somewhat aloof from her/his students, more so than instructors do today.

Another reason could be that the sample for the current study and the sample for the original study were distinctly different. The current study included many non-traditional age college students, whereas the original study had traditional students as subjects.

In addition, this study was a one-shot case study. A longitudinal test-retest methodology could be employed in which the same instrument was completed at least two separate times in a semester.

There could also be a survey done in one specific class in two different semesters, using two **different** groups of respondents, comparing the findings.

Another limitation of the study is the fact that student learning styles and temperament were not considered. What effect did these variables have on the results?

### Future Implications

This research provides an indication that immediacy behaviors are useful for improving student evaluations of

the teacher and course in the college classroom. While it has been established that certain behaviors are more effective than others (Gorham, et al., 1989) further research needs to be conducted to determine which techniques may improve student evaluations and motivation to learn in not only the college classroom, but in high school and the lower grades as well.

Also, further investigation is needed to learn exactly what techniques are most effective and appropriate for improving the teacher-student relationship. The findings of this study show that teachers who are high in eye contact, smile, move about the classroom, are more expressive, and position their bodies toward their students, are rated higher than those who do not. Perhaps these are some of the behaviors on which future researchers should focus their attention.

This study has shown that gender issues in teaching may indeed be changing. Now is the time to expand the literature in this area, to see where it will lead.

Though the factor analysis of the BII found that it contained four factors, this study chose to use it as a single factor instrument. But future researchers should take this into consideration before using it as either a uni or a multi-dimensional instrument.

According to the results of the current research, 169 of 197 respondents said they learned either a great deal or a fair amount from their more immediate teachers. Perhaps it

is time to include immediacy skills in the training of our teachers, since those teachers who are considered highly immediate have a better chance of being more effective than those with low immediacy styles.

Although not found by this researcher in this study, interaction effects between gender and age in relation to student perceptions of teachers and courses should be examined by future researchers.

Though the respondents in this study may have had a wider age range than in some previous studies, the question still remains: is there a difference between ratings given by traditional 18-22 year old students and those of their non-traditional counterparts?

Another area that needs more exploration is that of student learning styles and their possible impact on student perceptions of the teacher and course. And do those individual styles also affect student learning, both affective and cognitive? Even though there has been much research done on the effect teacher immediacy has on student affective learning, there has been very little done in the area of immediacy and cognitive learning. Future researchers in communication may find this a highly fruitful area and add much to the communication and education literature.

**APPENDIX A**



## -APPENDIX A

## AFFINITY-SEEKING TECHNIQUES AND DESCRIPTIONS OF CLASSROOM USAGE

1. *Altruism.* The teacher attempting to get a student to like her/him tries to be of help and assistance to the student in whatever he/she is currently doing. For example, the teacher does things ranging from holding the door for the student, assisting him/her with studies, helping him/her get the needed materials for assignments, to assisting student with other school related tasks. The teacher also gives advice when it is requested.
2. *Assume Control.* The teacher attempting to get a student to like her/him presents self as a leader, a person who has control over her/his classroom. For example, he/she directs the conversations held by students, takes charge of the classroom activities the two engage in, and mentions examples of where he/she has taken charge or served as a leader in the past.
3. *Assume Equality.* The teacher attempting to get a student to like her/him presents self as an equal of the other person. For example, he/she avoids appearing superior or snobbish, and does not play "one-upmanship" games.
4. *Comfortable Self.* The teacher attempting to get a student to like her/him acts comfortable in the setting the two find themselves, comfortable with her/himself, and comfortable with the student. He/she is relaxed, at ease, casual, and content. Distractions and disturbances in the environment are ignored. The teacher tries to look as if he/she is having a good time, even if he/she is not. The teacher gives the impression that "nothing bothers" her/him.
5. *Concede Control.* The teacher attempting to get a student to like her/him allows the student to control the relationship and situations surrounding the two. For example, he/she lets the student take charge of conversations and so on. The teacher attempting to be liked also lets the student influence her/his actions by not acting dominant.
6. *Conversational Rule-Keeping.* The teacher attempting to get a student to like her/him follows closely the culture's rules for how people socialize with others by demonstrating cooperation, friendliness, and politeness. The teacher works hard at giving relevant answers to questions, saying the right things, acting interested and involved in conversations, and adapting her/his messages to the particular student or situation. They avoid changing the topic too soon, interrupting the student, dominating class room discussions, and excessive self-references. The teacher using this strategy tries to avoid topics that are not of common interest to her/his students.
7. *Dynamism.* The teacher attempting to get a student to like her/him presents her/himself as a dynamic, active, and enthusiastic person. For example, they act physically animated and very lively while talking with the student, vary intonation and other vocal characteristics, and is outgoing and extroverted with the students.
8. *Elicit Other's Disclosure.* The teacher attempting to get a student to like her/him encourages the student to talk by asking questions and reinforcing the student for responding. For example, they inquire about the student's interests, feelings, opinions, views, and so on. They respond as if these are important and interesting, and continues to ask more questions of the student.
9. *Facilitate Enjoyment.* The teacher attempting to get a student to like her/him seeks to make the situations in which the two are involved very enjoyable experiences. The teacher does things the students will enjoy, is entertaining, tells jokes and interesting stories, talks about interesting topics, says funny things, and tries to make the classroom conducive to enjoyment and learning.
10. *Inclusion of Others.* The teacher attempting to get a student to like her/him includes the student in her/his social activities and group of friends. They introduce the student to her/his friends, and make the student feel like "one of the group."
11. *Influence Perceptions of Closeness.* The teacher attempting to get a student to like her/him engages in behaviors that lead the student to perceive the relationship as being closer and more established than it has actually been. For example, he/she uses nicknames of the students, talks about "we", rather than "I" or "you". They also discuss any prior activities that included both of them.
12. *Listening.* The teacher attempting to get a student to like her/him pays close attention to what the student says, listening very actively. They focus attention solely on the student, paying strict attention to what is said. Moreover, the teacher attempting to be liked demonstrates that he/she listens by being responsive to the student's ideas, asking for clarification of ambiguities, being open-minded, and remembering things the student says.
13. *Nonverbal Immediacy.* The teacher attempting to get a student to like her/him signals interest and liking through various nonverbal cues. For example, the teacher frequently makes eye contact, stands or sits close to the student, smiles, leans toward the student, makes frequent head nods, and directs much gaze toward the student. All of the above indicate the teacher is very much interested in the student and what he/she has to say.
14. *Openness.* The teacher attempting to get a student to like her/him is open. They disclose information about her/his background, interests, and views. They may even disclose very personal information about her/his insecurities, weaknesses, and fears to make the student feel very special (e.g., just between you and me).
15. *Optimism.* The teacher attempting to get a student to like her/him presents self as a positive person—an optimist—so that he/she will appear to be a person who is pleasant to be around. They act in a "happy-go-lucky" manner, are cheerful, and look on the positive side of things. They avoid complaining about things, talking about depressing topics, and being critical of self and others.

## APPENDIX A

(CONTINUED)

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16. *Personal Autonomy.* The teacher attempting to get a student to like her/him presents self as an independent, free-thinking person—the kind of person who stands on their own, speaks their mind regardless of the consequences, refuses to change their behavior to meet the expectation of others, and knows where he/she is going in life. For instance, if the teacher finds he/she disagrees with the student on some issue, the teacher states her/his opinion anyway, and is confident that her/his view is right, and may even try to change the mind of the student.
  17. *Physical Attractiveness.* The teacher attempting to get a student to like her/him tries to look as attractive and professional as possible in appearance and attire. They wear nice clothes, practice good grooming, show concern for proper hygiene, stand up straight, and monitor their appearance.
  18. *Present Interesting Self.* The teacher attempting to get a student to like her/him presents self to be a person who would be interesting to know. For example, he/she highlights past accomplishments and positive qualities, emphasizes things that make her/him especially interesting, expresses unique ideas, and demonstrates intelligence and knowledge. The teacher may discreetly drop the names of impressive people he/she knows. They may even do outlandish things to appear unpredictable, wild, or crazy.
  19. *Reward Association.* The teacher attempting to get a student to like her/him presents self as an important figure who can reward the student for associating with her or him. For instance, he/she offers to do favors for the other, and gives the students information that would be valuable. The teacher's basic message to the student is "if you like me, you will gain something."
  20. *Self-Concept Confirmation.* The teacher attempting to get a student to like her/him demonstrates respect for the student, helps the student feel good about how they view themselves. For example, the teacher treats the student like a very important person, compliments the student, says only positive things about the student, and treats the things the student says as being very important information. They may also tell other teachers about what a great student the individual is, in hopes that the comment will get back to the student through third parties.
  21. *Self-Inclusion.* The teacher attempting to get a student to like her/him sets up frequent encounters with the student. For example, the teacher will initiate casual encounters with the student, attempt to schedule future encounters, tries to be physically close to the student, and puts her/himself in a position to be invited to participate in some of the student's social activities/groups/clubs.
  22. *Sensitivity.* The teacher attempting to get a student to like her/him acts in a warm, empathic manner toward the student to communicate caring and concern. They also show sympathy to the student's problems and anxieties, spend time working at understanding how the student sees their life, and accept what the student says as an honest response. The message is "I care about you as a person."
  23. *Similarity.* The teacher attempting to get a student to like her/him tries to make the student feel that the two of them are similar in attitudes, values, interests, preferences, personality, and so on. They express views that are similar to the views of the student, agree with some things the student says, and points out the areas that the two have in common. Moreover, the teacher deliberately avoids engaging in behaviors that would suggest differences between the two.
  24. *Supportiveness.* The teacher attempting to get a student to like her/him is supportive of the student and the student's positions by being encouraging, agreeable, and reinforcing to the student. The teacher also avoids criticizing the student or saying anything that might hurt the student's feelings, and sides with the student in disagreements they have with others.
  25. *Trustworthiness.* The teacher attempting to get a student to like her/him presents self as trustworthy and reliable. For example, he/she emphasizes her/his responsibility, reliability, fairness, dedication, honesty, and sincerity. They also maintain consistency among their stated beliefs and behaviors, fulfill any commitments made to the student, and avoid "false fronts" by acting natural at all times.
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Taken from: Richmond, V.P. (1990). Communication in the classroom: Power and Motivation. Communication Education, 39, 3, pp. 186-187.

**APPENDIX B**

## APPENDIX B

To the respondent: When filling out this survey, please think back to the class you had immediately before this one and answer the questions with **that** particular instructor in mind. Please be assured that your responses will remain confidential. Only the researcher will see this questionnaire. And you are **not** required to put your name anywhere on this instrument.

Please mark the following statements to indicate whether you: (1) strongly disagree; (2) disagree; (3) moderately disagree; (4) are undecided; (5) moderately agree; (6) agree; (7) strongly agree. There is no correct answer, simply record your perceptions.

- \* \_\_\_1. This instructor engages in more eye contact with me when teaching than most other instructors.
- \* \_\_\_2. This instructor has a more tense body position while teaching than most other instructors.
- \* \_\_\_3. This instructor gestures more while teaching than most other instructors.
- \* \_\_\_4. This instructor engages in more movement while teaching than most other instructors.
- \* \_\_\_5. This instructor has a more relaxed body position while teaching than most other instructors.
- \* \_\_\_6. This instructor directs her/his body position more toward students while teaching than most other instructors.
- \* \_\_\_7. This instructor smiles more during class than most other instructors.
- \* \_\_\_8. This instructor is more vocally expressive while teaching than most other instructors.
- \* \_\_\_9. This instructor engages in less eye contact while teaching than most other instructors.
- \* \_\_\_10. This instructor has a less tense body position while teaching than most other instructors.
- \* \_\_\_11. This instructor gestures less while teaching than most other instructors.
- \* \_\_\_12. This instructor engages in less movement while

**APPENDIX B (cont.)**

teaching than most other instructors.

- \* \_\_\_ 13. This instructor has a less relaxed body position while teaching than most other instructors.
- \* \_\_\_ 14. This instructor directs her/his body position less toward the students than most other instructors.
- \* \_\_\_ 15. This instructor smiles less during class than most other instructors.
- \_\_\_ 16. This instructor is less vocally expressive while teaching than most other instructors.

Circle the number that best describes your feelings, again keeping in mind the course/instructor before this one!!

- 17. In terms of the directions my life is taking, this course was:
  - (1) relevant
  - (2) somewhat relevant
  - (3) irrelevant
  - (4) I am unsure
- 18. In the course I learned:
  - (1) a great deal
  - (2) a fair amount
  - (3) very little
  - (4) I am unsure
- 19. I would have preferred that the course:
  - (1) be more structured or organized
  - (2) be less structured or organized
  - (3) maintain the present level of structure
- 20. Generally, how valuable did you find the assigned readings in terms of their contribution to your learning in the course?
  - (1) very valuable
  - (2) fairly valuable
  - (3) not very valuable
  - (4) there were no assigned readings
- 21. The instructor's ability to ask thought-provoking questions was:
  - 1) excellent
  - 2) good

## APPENDIX B (cont.)

- 3) mediocre
  - 4) poor
22. The instructor's overall effectiveness as a discussion leader was:
- 1) excellent
  - 2) good
  - 3) mediocre
  - 4) poor
23. The instructor's ability to use a variety of teaching techniques was:
- 1) excellent
  - 2) good
  - 3) mediocre
  - 4) poor
24. The instructor's management of day-to-day administrative details was:
- 1) excellent
  - 2) good
  - 3) mediocre
  - 4) poor
25. The instructor's ability to relate to people in ways which promoted mutual respect was:
- 1) excellent
  - 2) good
  - 3) mediocre
  - 4) poor
26. The instructor's willingness to explore a variety of points of view was:
- 1) excellent
  - 2) good
  - 3) mediocre
  - 4) poor
27. Overall, I would rate this course as:
- (1) excellent
  - (2) good
  - (3) mediocre
  - (4) poor
28. Overall, I would rate the teaching of the course as:
- (1) excellent
  - (2) good
  - (3) mediocre
  - (4) poor

**APPENDIX B (cont.)**

Please check each item below, again keeping in mind the course before this one!

29. My gender is (check one):    \_\_Female       \_\_Male

30. The instructor's gender is:   \_\_Female       \_\_Male

31. My age is \_\_\_\_\_.

32. For my degree (plan of study) this course was:  
                  required\_\_\_\_\_       elective\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your cooperation in completing this survey!!!

\* Items 1-15 taken from: Andersen, J. (1978). Teacher immediacy as a predictor of teaching effectiveness. As cited in Nimmo, D. (Ed.) (1979). Communication Yearbook 3. Transaction Books, New Brunswick, NJ. p.547.

Items 17-28 were adapted from **TABS (Teaching Analysis By Students)**. Created by the School of Education, University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

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