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Running head: INFLUENCE OF TEACHER IMMEDIACY

Influence of Teacher Immediacy on Student Evaluations
of Teachers in American and Chinese Classrooms

A Thesis Presented to The Faculty of the Department of Communication
Rochester Institute of Technology

In Partial Fulfillment of the Master of Science Degree in
Communication & Media Technologies

by

Wenli Gao

February 27, 2006

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Dedication

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Abstract

This study investigated student perspectives on teacher immediacy in American and Chinese classrooms, and the correlation between immediacy and teacher evaluation. Specific immediacy behaviors that are most associated with teacher evaluation among American and Chinese students were also examined. Two hundred seventy-seven university students responded to instruments designed to measure teacher immediacy and teacher evaluation. Chinese students perceived a lower amount of instructor nonverbal immediacy than American students, but there is no significant difference between the two groups on verbal immediacy. Significant positive correlations were found between teacher immediacy and teacher evaluation in both groups. Praising students' work and soliciting viewpoints or opinions were found to be most associated with teacher evaluation in American classrooms and Chinese classrooms respectively.

Introduction

At colleges and universities faculty are judged not only on their scholarship, research, and professional activities, but increasingly on their teaching abilities. At most institutions, teaching quality is considered the primary method for promotion and tenure decisions (Panici, 1999). Fortunately, there has been significant research into teaching effectiveness and student evaluations of teachers. Some of this research examines teacher communication styles in the classroom and how open and accessible teachers are to student needs.

Teacher evaluation has been proved to be related to many factors such as teacher communication behavior (McCroskey, Richmond, Sallinen, Fayer & Barraclough, 1995), attire (Morris, Gorham, Cohen & Huffman, 1996) and caring (Teven & McCroskey, 1996). Beatty and Zahn's (1990) study indicated that communication teachers characteristically received higher student evaluations than teachers in other disciplines. Communication teachers who are perceived as nice, pleasant, kind, friendly, good-natured, cheerful, sociable, cooperative and honest, produce higher student expectations for performance. Students learn most from teachers who are "warm, friendly, immediate, approachable, affiliative and fostering of close, professionally appropriate personal relationships" (Anderson & Anderson, 1987, p.57). Scott and Nussbaum (1981) also suggested that ratings were informative about teacher communication skills. From this perspective, teacher immediacy may also influence student evaluations of their instructors.

The concept of immediacy originated from the work of Mehrabian (1967; 1971) and refers to behaviors of approach and avoidance related to one's sense of liking. People are drawn toward persons and things they like, evaluate positively, and prefer; and they avoid or move away from things they dislike, evaluate negatively, or do not prefer (Merhrabian, 1971). Immediacy behaviors, or approach behaviors reduce psychological distance. Immediate communicators generally inferred that they liked the person they interacted with, and that a positive relationship existed between the two individuals (Mehrabian, 1967). Anderson (1979) extended Mehrabian's immediacy concept and applied it to the classroom setting, especially teacher immediacy. Teacher immediacy referred to the verbal and nonverbal communication expressed by teachers that reduced both physical and psychological distance between teachers and students (Anderson, 1979).

Immediacy behaviors have been categorized by researchers as verbal immediacy behaviors and nonverbal immediacy behaviors. Gorham (1988) identified several verbal immediacy behaviors used by instructors in the classroom. Typical verbal immediate behaviors include using personal examples, engaging in humor, and asking questions and discussing issues in class, initiating conversation with students before or after class, addressing students by name, praising student work, as well as encouraging student expression of opinions or viewpoints. Other verbal immediate behaviors, such as self-disclosure and narrative, are also used by instructors in the college classroom, although the primary purpose behind such use is to clarify course content and enhance students' educational experience (Downs, Javidi, & Nussbaum, 1988). Anderson (1979) defined

immediacy as “ the nonverbal manifestation of high affect”(p.545). Typical nonverbal immediacy behaviors that express high affect include smiling at the class, maintaining close body contact, using purposeful body movement, using a variety of vocal expressions while talking to the class, engaging in touch, appearing relaxed, gesturing during class, and utilizing eye contact.

Until recently, the study of instructor immediacy has been limited to North American settings. North American includes U.S. and Canada, referred to as American here after in the paper. It is critical to carry cross-cultural research on teacher immediacy because culture plays an important role in the communication process and is a framing and shaping influence. Cultural groups share styles of languages, symbols, and components of cultural heritage (Banks & Gay, 1978). McCroskey and Richmond (1990) noted that “ one’s communication norms and competencies are culture-bound” (p.74). One communication behavior that works well in one culture does not necessarily work well in another culture. “Each cultural world operates according to its own internal dynamics, its own principles, and its own laws—written and unwritten” (Hall & Hall, 1990, p.3). One needs to follow the rules that dominate in the country and adapts behaviors to better fit in that culture.

Little is known about Chinese students’ perceptions on teacher immediacy and its influence on student evaluations of their instructors. According to Alston and He (1997) there exists great differences in communication styles between the Chinese and the American cultures, and these differences extended into the classroom. Due to these cultural differences, it is possible that Chinese students and American students will have

different perceptions on teacher immediacy. The relationship between student perceptions of immediacy behaviors and student evaluations of instructors may be different among American and Chinese students. Moreover, the specific immediacy behaviors that are most strongly associated with American and Chinese student evaluations of their instructors may also vary. The purpose of this study is to examine the differences of perceptions on teacher immediacy, the relationship between student perceptions of immediacy behaviors and student evaluations of instructor, and the specific immediacy behaviors related to student evaluations among students in China and in the United States.

Review of Literature

Teacher Immediacy Research

There is extensive research on teacher immediacy, most performed on the relationship of teacher immediacy with learning (Andersen, 1979; Andersen, Norton, & Nussbaum, 1981; Andersen & Withrow, 1981; Witt & Wheelless, 2001; Chesebro, 2003; Christophel, 1990; Kelly & Gorhan, 1988; Comstock, Rowell & Bowers, 1995; Sanders & Wiseman, 1990; Gorham, 1988; Downs, Javidi, & Nussbaum, 1988; Christensen & Menzel, 1998). Teacher immediacy had also been found to be related with humor (Gorham & Christophel, 1990), teacher credibility and trust (Thweatt & McCroskey, 1998; Chamberline, 2000), student motivation (Frymier & Houser, 2000; Christophel & Gorham, 1995), teacher compliance-gaining (Kearney, 1988), as well as teacher evaluation (McCroskey et. al., 1995).

From a theoretical standpoint, Bloom (1956) conceptualize learning as affective, behavioral, and cognitive. Affective learning refers to the development of a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward learning; behavioral learning refers to the development of psychomotor skills or observable behavior change as a result of learning; and cognitive learning refers to comprehension and retention of knowledge. The relationship between teacher immediacy and learning had for several decades been examined. Andersen (1979) examined the relationships among teacher immediacy, student cognitive learning and affective learning, and teaching effectiveness. The results indicated that immediacy predicted evaluations of teaching effectiveness and affective learning but did not have effects on cognitive learning. Andersen, Norton, and Nussbaum (1981), found that nonverbal teacher immediacy positively influenced the perceived effectiveness of a teacher and student affective orientation toward the course. They also found no meaningful relationship between teacher immediacy and cognitive learning. Moreover, Andersen and Withrow (1981) examined the role of immediacy on the nonverbal expressiveness of teachers. Selecting items from the Behavioral Indicators of Immediacy Scale (Andersen, Andersen, & Jensen, 1979), the Communication Style Measure (Norton, 1983) and including new items directly measuring nonverbal expressiveness, they developed new measurements of nonverbal expressiveness. The results indicated that nonverbal expressiveness had a positive impact on the students' attitude toward the instructor and the message. Still, no effect was found for the relationship among nonverbal immediacy behaviors and cognitive learning. Differently, Witt and Wheelless (2001) used experimental manipulation of combinations of nonverbal and verbal

immediacy to more precisely test causal links in relation to recall, learning loss, and affective learning. Obtained effects strengthened previous research associating teacher nonverbal immediacy with enhanced cognitive and affective learning outcomes.

However, higher verbal immediacy in the experimental manipulations, when combined with higher and lower nonverbal immediacy, was not observed to produce greater cognitive learning. More recently, Chesebro (2003) examined the role that nonverbal immediacy plays in clear teaching, as well as the effects clear and immediate teaching has on student learning, state receiver apprehension, and affect. The results indicated that nonverbal immediacy did not have a significant effect on learning, but did increase students' affect for the instructor and the course material.

On the contrary, some research indicates that there is relationship between immediacy and cognitive learning. Christophel (1990) found positive relationship between teacher immediacy and cognitive learning. Regression analyses in his study indicated both unique and colinear predictability of learning by nonverbal immediacy and state motivation. Kelly and Gorham (1988) investigated the influence of immediacy on the recall of information. They argued that immediacy influenced arousal which, in turn, influenced attention and recall. The results of their experiment indicated that the high physical immediacy with eye contact had the greatest effect on short term recall.

Immediacy has been found to be positively related to behavioral learning (Comstock, Rowell, & Bowers, 1995; Sanders & Wiseman, 1990). By manipulating three levels of teacher nonverbal immediacy, Comstock, Rowell, and Bowers (1995) found an inverted U curvilinear relationship with cognitive, affective, and behavior learning, which

implied that moderately high teacher immediacy was more effective in helping student learn than either excessively high or low immediacy. The study also included a measure of actual student behavior in addition to behavioral attitudes and intentions. Sanders and Wiseman (1990) studied the effects of verbal and nonverbal teacher immediacy on perceived cognitive, affective, and behavioral learning in the multicultural classroom. Significant and positive correlations were found between the immediacy scale and all of the outcome measures. These studies focused mainly on the influence of nonverbal immediacy behaviors. Other studies assessed verbal immediacy.

Gorham (1988) developed a measure of verbal immediacy scale including the use of personal examples, encouraging students to talk, discussing the issues students bring up in class, and using humor. The study also found that verbal immediacy positively related to students' perceptions of cognitive learning, behavioral intent, and general affect toward the course. Downs, Javidi, and Nussbaum (1988) also investigated three aspects of verbal immediacy and hypothesized that award winning teachers may be able to determine when they were engaging in too much self-disclosure or using inappropriate humor. Christensen and Menzel (1998) also examined teacher immediacy behaviors as they occurred in actual relationships between college professors and students. They found positive, linear relationships between teacher nonverbal and verbal immediacy and perceived cognitive, affective, and behavioral learning. They also found a positive, linear relationship between both kinds of teacher immediacy and state motivation.

There is extensive work done on the impact of teacher immediacy on other factors. Gorham and Christophel (1990) investigated teachers' use of humor in

relationship to immediacy and learning. In their study, things teachers did to show “a sense of humor” were analyzed and correlated with overall immediacy and perceived cognitive and affective learning outcomes. Thweatt and McCroskey (1998) investigated the impact of teacher immediacy and teacher misbehavior on student perceptions of their teachers’ credibility on the dimensions of competence, trustworthiness, and caring. The result indicated the presence of strong positive main effects for teacher immediacy and strong negative effects for teacher misbehavior on all dimensions of credibility.

Chamberline (2000) investigated the relationship between nonverbal behaviors of immediacy and dominance on teachers’ initial impressions of trust toward a supervisor. The study found that supervisor immediacy resulted in higher perceptions of trust than supervisor dominance. Immediacy also rated higher on measures of appropriateness and effectiveness than dominance. Frymier and Houser (2000) conducted research on the teacher-student relationship as an interpersonal relationship. The study found referential skills, ego support, and immediacy to have a strong relationship with student learning and motivation. Christophel and Gorham (1995) investigated relationships among, and changes in, student state motivation, teacher immediacy, and student-perceived sources of motivation and demotivation across the course of a semester in college classes.

Findings supported a causal relationship between teacher immediacy and state motivation. Kearney et. al (1988) investigated the effects of teacher nonverbal immediacy and strategy type on college students’ likelihood of resisting teacher compliance-gaining attempts. Results confirm that students were less likely to resist an immediate teacher who employed prosocial techniques, but more likely to resist an immediate teacher who

used antisocial techniques. In contrast, students reported greater resistance to a nonimmediate teacher employing prosocial techniques, but less resistance to a nonimmediate teacher who used antisocial techniques.

Cross-Cultural Studies of Teacher Immediacy

Several studies have drawn comparison between different cultures. Collier and Powell (1986) found a positive relationship between teacher immediacy and teacher effectiveness in multicultural classrooms of Euro-American, Hispanic, African-American, and Asian students. They also found that specific cultural cues worked differently for the four cultural groups. Similarly, Sanders and Wiseman (1990) found that teacher immediacy positively contributed to the cognitive, affective, and behavioral learning of Euro-American, Asian, Hispanic, and African-American students, but particular cultural cues operated differently in different cultural groups. Powell and Harville (1990) investigated the correlations between teacher verbal and nonverbal immediacy and teacher clarity for ethnically diverse students. Cultural differences were found in the relationships among verbal and nonverbal immediacy and teacher clarity. More recently, Neuliep (1995) found a greater association with cognitive, affective, and behavioral learning for Euro-American than African-American students, though both groups showed a positive relationship between immediacy and learning.

The above studies were conducted in multi-cultural classrooms. However, the similarities between such ethnic sub-groups existing within U.S. culture may be greater than the differences (McCroskey et al., 1996). It is essential to examine students and teachers living in other cultures to truly test the immediacy theory. Fayer, Gorham and

McCroskey (1988) explored teacher immediacy in the United States Mainland and Puerto Rican cultures. They found immediacy positively related to cognitive and affective learning in both cultures, but the relation was more obvious for students in the United States Mainland than students in Puerto Rican. McCroskey et al (1996) studied students from four different cultures: American college students as a baseline, Australian students representing a culture that is similar to the U.S., Puerto Rican students representing a highly immediate culture, and Finnish students representing a non-immediate culture. They found that in all four cultures increased teacher immediacy was associated with higher cognitive learning. However, the degree of the relationship differed. Roach and Byrne (2001) addressed patterns and influences of student perceptions of instructor power use, affinity-seeking, and nonverbal immediacy in American and in German classrooms. Their findings identified a positive relationship between nonverbal immediacy and affective and cognitive learning for both samples, although the relationships were significantly weaker for German students than for U.S. students. Johnson and Miller (2002) conducted a cross-cultural study of immediacy, with samples of students drawn from a university in the U.S. and a university in Kenya. Positive relationships were identified between verbal immediacy, nonverbal immediacy, credibility, and cognitive learning for both samples.

Some studies are conducted in China. Myers, Zhong, and Guan (1998) examined instructor immediacy in the Chinese and American classrooms, and its relationship with Chinese student learning. Results indicated that (a) Chinese students who received instruction from Chinese instructors perceived a lower amount of instructor nonverbal

immediacy than American students who received instruction from American instructors, (b) Chinese students who received instruction from Chinese instructors perceived a lower amount of instructor verbal immediacy than American students who received instruction from American instructors, and (c) perceived Chinese student affective and cognitive learning was slightly correlated with particular Chinese instructor nonverbal and verbal immediacy behaviors.

Zhang (2005) investigated classroom communication apprehension in Chinese college classrooms in reference to perceived instructor verbal and nonverbal immediacy and humor orientation, and student individual-level power distance. Perceived instructor verbal and nonverbal immediacy were not associated significantly with classroom communication apprehension. However, because most of the scales were US constructs emic to US culture, the degree of validity and generalizability of the scales could not be fully applied to Chinese culture.

Teacher Evaluations Research

The first formal student evaluations of teachers took place in the universities of medieval Europe (Centra, 1993). Currently, rare is the American college or university that does not use student evaluations of teaching in one way or another. Student evaluations of teachers are very useful indicator. Student ratings can be used to improve instruction, for personnel decisions, and help students select a course and instructor.

Seldin (1980) pointed that ratings were sometimes influenced by factors outside the instructor's control. It was argued that the ratings were variable with class size, sex composition and class level, the instructor's professional rank, whether the course was

required or elective, student grade-point average, student level of learning, and the instructor's personality. Centra (1993) also confirmed that teacher evaluations was affected by many factors, such as course difficulty, grading leniency, instructor popularity, student interest in subject before course, course work load, class size, student reason for taking the course, and student GPA. More recently, student evaluations were found to be related to instructor attire and teacher caring. Morris, Gorham, Cohen and Huffman (1996) conducted a study to investigate contemporary effects of instructor attire on students' perceptions of college teaches in a live lecture context. Results indicated that more formal dress was associated with increased ratings of instructor competence, particularly for female students rating female instructors. However, contrary to common assumptions, the most positive influences of instructor dress were found in the highly casual condition. Teven and McCroskey (1996) studied the relationship of perceived teacher caring with student learning and teacher evaluation. Student perceptions of caring on the part of their teachers were found to be substantially associated with the students' evaluation of their teachers, their affective learning, and their perceptions of their cognitive learning.

Research also points to a positive correlation between nonverbal immediacy behaviors and student evaluations for teacher. McCroskey at al (1995) sought to determine what specific teacher nonverbal immediacy behaviors are most associated with students' evaluations of their teachers. The research was based on data drawn from the cultures of Australia, Finland, and Puerto Rico as well as the dominant United State culture. The results of this study permitted a comparison of the relationship between

nonverbal immediacy and teacher evaluation across diverse cultural and linguistic communities as well as multi-cultural comparisons of the importance of individual immediacy behaviors to teacher evaluation.

However, there has no research done on the relationship between teacher immediacy and teacher evaluation in American and Chinese cultures. To conduct research on teacher immediacy and evaluation in those cultures, it is important to compare the two cultures.

Comparison of American and Chinese Cultures

When comparing the American and Chinese cultures, it is useful to use the deep structure of culture created by Hofstede (1984). There are four basic aspects of cultures. Hofstede (1984) presented four dimensions of culture: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism, and masculinity. The concept of power distance dealt with basic human inequality (Hofstede, 1984). The concept of power distance involved the issue of inequity among a society's members and the degree to which authority was centralized or decentralized (Hofstede, 2001). Hofstede (2001) defined power distance as "the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally" (p.98). Some cultures were predominant by a high power distance, while some were more equal and involved a low power distance. In an educational context, students from cultures with low power distance were more likely to place high value on independence, to show authoritarian attitudes only as a matter of individual personality, and to have positive associations with power and wealth. On the contrary, students were more likely to put high value on

conformity, show authoritarian attitudes as a social norm, and have negative associations with power and wealth in a high power distance culture (Hofstede, 1984).

Hofstede (1984) also noted that “ways of coping with uncertainty belong to the cultural heritage of societies and they are transferred and reinforced through basic institutions like the family, the school, and the state” (p.111). Hofstede (2001) defined uncertainty avoidance as “the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by uncertain or unknown situations” (p.161). People in different cultures dealt with uncertainty in different ways. People in some cultures were very uncomfortable about uncertainty. They tried to predict everything and relieved the anxiety that uncertainty brought, while people in other cultures were more tolerant about the unpredicted future. In low uncertainty avoidance cultures, people were more ready to live by the day, have stronger achievement motivation, have more hope of success, and engage in more risk-taking (Hofstede, 1984). In cultures characterized by high uncertainty avoidance, people would be more likely to worry about the future, have less achievement motivation, have greater fear of failure, and engage in less-risk taking (Hofstede, 1984, p.132).

Individualism described the relationship between the individual and the collectivity which prevailed in a given society (Hofstede, 1984, p.148). In the individualistic culture, one made his/her decision based on what he/she thought was most favorite for him/her. However, in the collectivistic culture, one focused on his/her relatedness to other group members. In the educational context, students from low individualistic cultures would be more likely to consider it less socially acceptable to claim pursuing their own ends without minding others, hold duty in life in higher esteem,

and undergo more years of schooling to qualify for a given job. Conversely, students from highly individualistic cultures were more likely to consider it socially acceptable to claim pursuing their own ends without minding others, hold enjoyment in life in higher esteem, and undergo less years of schooling to qualify for a given job (Hofstede, 1984).

The forth dimension of culture is masculinity. Hofstede (1984) noted that “the duality of the sexes is a fundamental fact with which different societies cope in different ways” (p.176). Males seemed more aggressive and females seemed more caring. Cultures had norms and expectations for different genders. Certain behaviors were “more suitable for females or more suitable to males” (Hofstede, 1984, p.177). In an educational context, students from a low masculine culture were less likely to be interested in recognition and have more sympathy for the weak. Conversely, students from a high masculine culture were more likely to aspire to recognition, have more admiration for the strong, and be less benevolent (Hofstede, 1984).

Putting American and Chinese cultures into the four cultural dimensions is very useful in understanding the cultural differences. Hofstede (1984) studied cultural difference for 39 countries. The power distance index (PDI) score was 40 for the U. S. For China it was 80, suggesting that power distance in China was much greater than in the U. S., which meant equality among members was stressed and inequality among members was emphasized in China. The average PDI score was 51, which meant China was in the category of high power distance cultures and the U.S. belonged to a low power distance culture. For uncertainty avoidance, the mean uncertainty avoidance index (UAI) score for 39 countries was 64, with a score of 46 for the U.S. and 30 for China,

suggesting that Americans were less comfortable with uncertainty. For the individualism index (IDV), the U. S. had a score of 91. China had a much lower score (20) than the U.S., in which members looked out for themselves and their immediate families.

Generally, the Chinese culture was regarded as collectivism, which was described by Hofstede (1980) as “tightly knit social framework in which individuals can expect their relatives, clan, or other in-group to look after them in exchange of unquestioning loyalty” (p. 83). China scored a bit higher on masculine score than the U.S.(66 versus 62), but both culture represented a highly masculine culture. Chinese people were usually stereotyped as being silent, shy, taciturn, introverted, and subservient to authority (Klopf, 1997; Myers, Zhong, & Guan, 1998).

These cultural dimensions and traits penetrate to Chinese classroom environment too. In the Chinese culture, achievement was defined in academic terms (Bond, 1991) and educational aspirations, even among children, were high (Chu & Ju, 1997). Only a minute portion of the population enjoyed the privilege of receiving a higher education. Unlike American college students who arranged the their programs of study independently with guidance from their academic advisors, Chinese college students enjoyed less choices. They were typically placed into a specific program (Myers, Zhong, Guan, 1998). Chinese students were given less chance for course and instructor selection. Usually, one major professor was assigned to each class, and this professor oversaw students’ academic and personal development throughout the four years of university life (Moore & Zhong, 1995).

Teaching behaviors of Chinese instructors differ from those of American instructors. According to Hu and Grove (1991), admired instructors were those who gave structured, information-packed lectures in the Chinese classroom setting. Students were “programmed to sit in large lecture halls, assiduously take notes, and memorize what the teacher has told them without ever having the opportunity for class discussion or analysis of material” (Rubin, 1983, p.35). On the contrary, Hu and Groove (1991) noted that in the American classroom an emphasis was placed on acquiring analytical and verbal skills. Moreover, instructors in the Chinese classroom were regarded as authority figures (Lu, 1997). On the other hand, American instructors were rated positively if they were viewed as being approachable and likeable as well as competent (Myers, 1996; Powers, Nitcavic, & Koerner, 1990).

Hypothesis and Research Questions

In this study, the main focus is on student perceptions of their instructors’ immediacy behaviors and how these perceptions are related to their evaluation for instructors. Cross-culture studies are conducted between American students and Chinese students. This study also aims at finding the specific immediacy behaviors that are most associated with student evaluations of instructors among American and Chinese students.

Most immediacy research was done in a homogenous setting in the U.S. Studying teacher immediacy in other cultures was growing, with research conducted in Japan (Hinkle, 1998), Australia, Finland, and Puerto Rico (McCroskey, Richmond, Sallinen, Fayer, & Barraclough, 1995; McCroskey, Fayer et al., 1996; McCroskey, Sallinen et al., 1996), Hong Kong (Thomas-Maddox, 1997), Germany (Roach & Byrne, 2001), and

Kenya (Johnson & Miller, 2002). Still, little is known about student perceptions of teacher immediacy in China. Due to the difference in communication styles, it is possible that Chinese students will perceive teacher immediacy differently from American students. Previous research also showed that Chinese students who received instruction from Chinese instructors perceived a lower amount of instructor immediacy than American students who received instruction from American instructors (Myers, Zhong, & Guan, 1998). Based on the previous research findings above, the first hypothesis is formed:

H1: Chinese students receiving instruction from Chinese instructors will perceive a lower amount of instructor verbal immediacy than American students receiving instruction from American instructors.

H2: Chinese students receiving instruction from Chinese instructors will perceive a lower amount of instructor nonverbal immediacy than American students receiving instruction from American instructors.

Previous research on teacher immediacy has focused primarily on the relationship between teacher immediacy and learning. Many of these researches had shown that teacher immediacy had a positive effect on students' cognitive, affective, and behavior learning. The relationship between teacher immediacy and teacher evaluation had been done (McCroskey, Richmond, Sallinen, Fayer & Barraclough, 1995), but it only examined the relationship between nonverbal immediacy and teacher evaluation. This study will provide a more detailed examination of the relationship between teacher evaluation and both verbal and nonverbal immediacy.

To examine whether a relationship exists between perceived instructor immediacy and teacher evaluation, the following research question is formulated:

RQ1: What is the relationship between student perceptions of immediacy behaviors and student evaluation of instructors for Chinese students and American students?

This study will determine the relationship between student perceptions of immediacy behaviors and student evaluation of instructors for American students and Chinese students. If the relationship were found to be very similar, a presumption for the generalizability of the immediacy study in the U.S. and China might be established. Future research can be directed toward identifying the limitations for this generalization. On the contrary, if meaningful differences on the relationship were found between the two cultures, future research can be directed toward identifying the cultural elements that are responsible for the difference.

Moreover, this study tries to provide diagnostic feedback to instructors about their teaching behaviors. Teachers will have an understanding of the desired behaviors from students' perspectives. This will benefit their teaching, and in the long run, will make teachers more effective. Culturally identified teacher immediacy behaviors that are most associated with student evaluations in China and U.S. will benefit teachers for both cultures. Teacher can develop culturally based behaviors to improve their teaching. Thus, the second research question is proposed:

RQ2: What immediacy behaviors are most associated with student evaluation of their instructors among students in the U.S. and China?

Methods

Subjects

To collect data for the study, a total of 277 undergraduate university students were selected. One hundred and forty nine American students were enrolled in an introductory communication courses at Rochester Institute of Technology in Rochester, NY; 128 Chinese participants were from an English class at Shanghai International Studies University in Shanghai. All participants voluntarily agreed to participate in the study.

The American sample consisted of 99 male and 48 female students. 2 students failed to report gender. Among American students, 100 students reported required to take the course and 37 reported not required. 12 students failed report whether the course is required or not. Sixteen participants were freshmen, 33 participants were sophomores, 53 participants were juniors, 43 participants were seniors, and 2 participants were graduate students. 2 participants failed to report their class level.

The Chinese sample consisted of 25 male and 103 female students. Among Chinese students, 102 students reported required to take the course and 26 reported not required. Eight participants were freshmen, 117 participants were juniors, and 3 participants were seniors.

Procedure

Participants completed three instruments. These instruments were (a) Verbal Immediacy Behaviors Scale (Gorham, 1988), (b) Revised Nonverbal Immediacy Measure (McCroskey Richmond et. al., 1995), and (c) teacher evaluation questionnaire redesigned according to Student Instructional Rating System (Centra, 1993). Using the methodology

advocated by Plax, Kearney, McCroskey, and Richmond (1986), participants completed the instruments in reference to the instructor of the course they attended immediately prior to the survey. In this way, the teacher monitoring the survey should have exerted less influence on the results. Also, a more extensive teacher samples was able to be gathered. Data were collected after one month of the quarter so that participants had enough exposure to teachers they evaluated.

Instruments

Verbal Immediacy Behaviors Scale is a 17-item scale that asks respondents to report perceptions of their instructor's use of verbal immediacy behaviors. Responses were solicited using a five-point scale ranging from never (0) to very often (4). The 17-item measure of verbal immediacy had demonstrated consistently high reliability. Alpha and split-half reliabilities for students' assessments range from .83 to .94, and was reported at .89 for teachers' self-reports (Christophel, 1990; Gorham, 1988; Gorham & Zakahi, 1990; Powell & Harville, 1990). In this study, a coefficient alpha reliability of 0.85 was obtained.

Revised Nonverbal Immediacy Measure is a 10-item scale that asks respondents to report perceptions of their instructor's use of nonverbal immediacy behaviors and is recommended for use with an international student population (McCroskey, Sallinen et al., 1996). Responses were solicited using a five-point scale ranging from never (0) to very often (4). The original item "smiles at individual students" was revised to "frowns at individual students" because previous research showed the item was interpreted by many of students in a way very differently, and was in a way which was not consistent with the

intent of the item on the measure (McCroskey et. al., 1995). Instead of seeing this behavior as a positive indication of teacher immediacy, many students saw it as an indication of the teacher showing prejudicial favoritism toward some students over others. This item was revised and reverse scored prior to scoring the instrument. Previous reliability coefficient ranging from .69 to .89 had been reported for the summed scale (McCroskey, Fayer et al., 1996). In this study, a coefficient alpha reliability of 0.74 was obtained.

Teacher Evaluation is redesigned according to Student Instructional Rating System (SIRS). The original survey contained twenty items on five factors: instructor involvement, student interest, student-instructor interaction, course demands, and course organization. In this study, 11 questions were composed to cover the five factors. Responses were solicited using a five-point scale. The five-point scales used were superior, above average, average, below average, and inferior. In this study, a coefficient alpha reliability of 0.89 was obtained.

Data Analysis

Following reliability analysis of the scales, the two hypotheses were explored using t-test. The summed immediacy score served as the dependent variable and the student sample (i.e., American, Chinese) served as the independent variable. The first research question was answered using liner regression. The second research question was explored by a series of Pearson correlations.

Results

The first hypothesis predicted that Chinese students receiving instruction from Chinese instructors would perceive a lower amount of instructor verbal immediacy than American students receiving instruction from American instructors. Unexpectedly, the result of independent-groups *t*-test indicated that Chinese students ($M=2.16$, $SD=0.65$, $N=128$) did not report a lower amount of instructor verbal immediacy ($t(275)=-.64$, $p=0.52$) than American students ($M=2.21$, $SD=0.65$, $N=149$). Thus, hypothesis 1 was not supported.

The second hypothesis predicted that Chinese students receiving instruction from Chinese instructors would perceive a lower amount of instructor nonverbal immediacy than American students receiving instruction from American instructors. This hypothesis was supported. Chinese students ($M=2.16$, $SD=0.65$, $N=128$) reported a lower amount of instructor nonverbal immediacy ($t(275)=5.40$, $p<0.0005$) than American students ($M=2.21$, $SD=0.65$, $N=149$).

The first research question inquired the relationship between student perceptions of immediacy behaviors and student evaluation of instructors for Chinese students and American students. A linear regression was performed separately for American and Chinese samples. Teacher evaluation ratings were regressed onto the linear combination of verbal immediacy and nonverbal immediacy scores. As Table 1 shows, for both samples, verbal immediacy and nonverbal immediacy scores strongly predicted teacher evaluation ratings in a similar manner. No cultural differences were observed.

Table 1: Standardized Beta weights for VI and NVI scores for American and Chinese Samples

	Verbal Immediacy (VI)	Nonverbal Immediacy (NVI)	Adjusted R ² for Model
American	0.475***	0.364***	0.471***
Chinese	0.352***	0.428***	0.469***

*** $p < 0.0005$. Outcome variable: Teacher evaluation scores

The second research question inquired immediacy behaviors that are most associated with student evaluation of their instructors among students in the U.S. and China. Again, immediacy behaviors were divided into verbal immediacy behavior and nonverbal immediacy behavior. Pearson correlations were performed for each verbal immediacy behavior and teacher evaluation scores for both American and Chinese students (see Table 2). Overall, most verbal immediacy behaviors were correlated with teacher evaluation scores for both American and Chinese students, except “calls on student” ($r = -0.40$, $p > 0.05$) for American students and “is addressed by first name” ($r = 0.15$, $p > 0.05$) for Chinese students. Specifically, for American students, “praises students’ work” ($r = 0.60$), “uses humor in class” ($r = 0.50$), “discusses unrelated things” ($r = 0.47$) and “converses with students” ($r = 0.47$) are most strongly related with student evaluation of their instructors. For Chinese students, “solicits viewpoints or opinions” ($r = 0.52$), “uses humor in class” ($r = 0.50$), and “praises students’ work” ($r = 0.44$) are most related with student evaluation of their instructors. There are also some verbal immediacy behaviors that are both recognized as strongly correlated with teacher evaluation in each culture, such as “praises students’ work” and “uses humor in class”.

Table 2: Correlations between Verbal Immediacy Behaviors and Teacher Evaluation

Behavior	American	Chinese
Summed immediacy score	0.60**	0.60**
1. Uses examples/ experiences	0.37**	0.40**
2. Asks questions/ encourages talk	0.43**	0.34**
3. Gets into discussion	0.40**	0.43**
4. Uses humor in class	0.50**	0.50**
5. Addresses students by name	0.24**	0.35**
6. Addresses me by name	0.25**	0.37**
7. Converses with students	0.47**	0.30**
8. Initiates student conversations	0.32**	0.24**
9. Refers to class as "our" class	0.32**	0.37**
10. Provides feedback on work	0.35**	0.38**
11. Calls on students +	-0.40	-0.23**
12. Asks how students feel	0.33**	0.43**
13. Invites students to meet	0.30**	0.37**
14. Solicits viewpoints or opinions	0.43**	0.52**
15. Praises students' work	0.60**	0.44**
16. Discusses unrelated things	0.47**	0.37**
17. Is addressed by first name	0.19*	0.15

Note: + Item reverse-scored. * $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$

Pearson correlations were also calculated for each nonverbal immediacy behavior and teacher evaluation scores for both American and Chinese students (see Table 3).

Overall, most nonverbal immediacy behaviors were correlated with teacher evaluation scores for both American students, except "moves around the class" ($r=0.14$) and "looks at the board or notes" ($r=0.15$). For Chinese students, all nonverbal immediacy behaviors were correlated with teacher evaluation scores. Specifically, for American students, "variety of vocal expressions" ($r=0.52$), "monotone/dull voice" ($r=0.46$), "smiles at the class" ($r=0.37$) and "looks at the class" ($r=0.35$) are most strongly related with student evaluation of their instructors. For Chinese students, "smiles at the class" ($r=0.47$), "

monotone/dull voice" ($r=0.44$), "gestures" ($r=0.41$) and "frowns at individual students" ($r=0.37$) are most related with student evaluation of their instructors. There are also some nonverbal immediacy behaviors that are both recognized as strongly correlated with teacher evaluation in each culture, such as "monotone/dull voice" and "smiles at the class".

Table 3: Correlations between Nonverbal Immediacy Behaviors and Teacher Evaluation

Behavior	American	Chinese
Summed nonimmediacy score	0.53**	0.63**
1. Gestures	0.24**	0.41**
2. Monotone/dull voice +	0.46**	0.44**
3. Looks at the class	0.35**	0.35**
4. Smiles at the class	0.37**	0.47**
5. Tense body position +	0.27**	0.24**
6. Moves around the class	0.14	0.34**
7. Looks at the board or notes +	0.15	0.33**
8. Relaxed body position	0.33**	0.32**
9. Frowns at individual students +	0.20*	0.37**
10. Variety of vocal expressions	0.52**	0.35**

Note: + Item reverse-scored. * $p<0.05$ ** $p<0.01$

Discussion

The objective of this study is to investigate whether American and Chinese students differ in their perceptions of instructor verbal and nonverbal immediacy, the relationship between teacher immediacy and teacher evaluation, and specific immediacy behaviors that are most associated with teacher evaluation among American and Chinese students. The results of this study suggest that (a) Chinese students who received instructions from Chinese instructors did not perceive a lower amount of instructor verbal immediacy than American students who received instructions from American instructors;

(b) Chinese students who received instructions from Chinese instructors perceive a lower amount of instructor nonverbal immediacy than American students who received instructions from American instructors; (c) verbal immediacy and nonverbal immediacy scores strongly predicted teacher evaluation ratings for both American and Chinese students, and (d) “praises students’ work” and “solicits viewpoints or opinions” are verbal immediacy behaviors that are most related with student evaluation of their instructors for American and Chinese students respectively and “variety of vocal expressions” and “smiles at the class” are nonverbal immediacy behaviors that are most related with student evaluation of their instructors for American and Chinese students respectively.

When explaining the result of first hypothesis, it is necessary to reconsider Chinese culture. The Chinese are less socially extroverted (Hwang, 1987; CeCrae, Costa, & Yik, 1996), less expressive (Gao, 1997; Gao et al., 1996), more modest and humble (Gao et al., 1996), and engage in more self-effacing behaviors (Bond, Leung, & Wan, 1982) than American. Contrary to the hypothesis posited and previous research showing the Chinese students who received instructions from Chinese instructors perceive a lower amount of instructor verbal immediacy than American students who received instructions from American instructors (Myers, Zhong, & Guan, 1998), it raises the questions of whether Chinese students perceive a lower amount of instructor verbal immediacy than American students to future research. The result of this study might be due to a disproportionate ratio of male to female students (25 to 103), which in fact reflects the reality of the make-up of foreign language majors in China. Seldin (1980) pointed that

ratings were sometimes influenced by factors outside the instructor's control, such as class size, sex composition and class level, the instructor's professional rank, whether the course was required or elective, student grade-point average, student level of learning, and the instructor's personality. Jaasma (1997) found that females were more apprehensive than males. So this gender difference might be problematic. Besides, the university where the surveys were distributed was one of the best foreign language universities in China. For most of the time, courses were taught in English. Cultural difference might be minimized when instructors use English to teach. It is not representative for all Chinese instructors. However, it is possible that with the globalization and modernization of China, teachers do become more verbally immediate. So it opens the question to future researchers.

The difference in perceived nonverbal immediacy between American and Chinese may be due to several factors. First, a primary function of Chinese culture was to reinforce role and status differentials (Gao et al., 1996). In the Chinese classroom, the instructor-student relationship was bound by formality and respect (Hu & Grove, 1991). Consequently, Chinese instructors may be perceived less nonverbally immediate because role and status differences did not allow instructors to use more nonverbally immediate behaviors. For example, "relaxed body position" was informal and was not appropriate for instructor's role. Second, little interaction typically occurs between Chinese instructors and their students. Generally, Chinese students were passive classroom participants- they attend class, listen, take notes, and leave (Hu & Grove, 1991). Instructors spent most of their time lecturing, which made "gestures" or "smiles at

individual students” less important and “looks at the board or notes” more possible.

American students, on the other hand, were active participants in the construction of the classroom environment (Book & Putnam, 1992; Darling & Civikly, 1987) and American instructors utilized a variety of interactive teaching tools, including forums, discussion, and debates in addition to lectures. In this interactive environment, “gestures” and “smiles at the class” were more easily displayed.

Beta weights for verbal immediacy and nonverbal immediacy of both American and Chinese samples were both high, which suggested that the correlations between total immediacy scores and teacher evaluation were quite high. It is clear that teacher immediacy plays an important role in students’ evaluations of their instructors. It points toward the validity of teacher evaluation. Teacher immediacy might be a factor that should be included in teacher evaluation. The results also help explain the findings cited in Beatty and Zahn’s (1990) study which indicated communication teachers characteristically received higher student evaluation than did teachers in other disciplines. If we assume that communication teachers practice some of what they preach about immediacy, they should actually be better teachers than their colleagues as evaluated by their students.

For verbal immediacy behaviors that are most related to higher teacher evaluation, it seems American and Chinese students have similar criteria. “Using humor in class” and “praises students’ work” are both desirable by American and Chinese students, although the correlation between “praises students’ work” and teacher evaluation was slightly higher for American students. It is understandable that “is addressed by name” is not

correlated with teacher evaluation for Chinese students. Behaviors of individuals with lower status (i.e. students) were expected to complement the behaviors of individuals with higher status (i.e. instructors) in the Chinese culture (Gao, 1997). For the most of time, teachers were addressed by surname and title to indicate higher status.

On the other hand, it would appear that “smiles at the class” was the aspect of nonverbal immediacy behavior, which contributed to teachers receiving higher student evaluations in both America and China. “Variety of vocal expressions” is most important for American student, but is of less importance to Chinese students. “Monotone/dull voice” was a good indicator of teacher evaluation for both countries too, but it would indicate a lower teacher evaluation score.

Although some of the teacher immediacy behaviors are more correlated with teacher evaluation, the direction of the relationship is constant, at least for samples in America and Chinese in this study, indicating that regardless of culture, particular instructor verbal and nonverbal behaviors have an impact on teacher evaluation.

Limitations and Future Directions

Some limitations to this study should be considered. First, this study was conducted in a university regarded as a foreign language university in China. Teachers use English as teaching language for the most part. These teachers are not representative of typical Chinese teachers. Besides, there was a disproportionate ratio of male to female students (25 to 103) in China, but this ratio reflected the reality of the make-up of foreign language majors in China. A typical Chinese foreign language class of 30 people consists only four to five male students. This gender difference might be problematic.

A second limitation of this study was the translation problem. Because surveys were passed to English majors, we assumed that they could well understand the content. Translation and back translation procedures were omitted. For previous research on teacher immediacy in China, surveys were translated into Chinese (Myers, Zhong, & Guan, 1998). Instruments of cross-cultural teacher evaluation research were also translated into participants' first language (McCroskey et. al., 1995). There might be some difference when participants taking surveys in their second language.

A third limitation involved the degree of validity and generalizability of the scales in Chinese culture, because most of the scales were U.S. constructs emic to US culture. Zhang and Oetzel (2006) suggested that immediacy measures were culturally grounded. Certain immediacy behaviors are perceived differently across cultures. Some immediate behaviors in U.S. classrooms, such as engaging in small talk, self-disclosure, and addressing students by their first names, are considered inappropriate in Chinese classrooms (Myers et al, 1998; Zhang, 2005). Although the scales all yielded satisfactory reliabilities in this study, their validity and applicability to Chinese culture should be accepted with caution because different expectations toward instructor behaviors in China might engender different evaluations.

The findings from this study open up some promising directions for future research. First of all, do Chinese students really perceive a lower amount of instructor verbal immediacy than American students? It is possible that with the globalization and modernization of China, teachers do become more verbally immediate. More attention

should be paid to Chinese teachers' verbal immediacy, preferably with a more reliable Chinese instrument.

Second, it would be fruitful to examine viewpoints of Chinese students educated overseas. This study investigated the perception of native Chinese and American students in their home countries. The viewpoints of Chinese students who have been educated in America might be different. Given that a large number of Chinese students study in the U.S., their viewpoints may enable us to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the differences between the American and Chinese educational systems, because they have been exposed to both systems.

Third, this study indicated that there was a positive correlation between teacher immediacy and teacher evaluation in both cultures. Future research can be directed toward the generalization of correlation between teacher immediacy and teacher evaluation. Multi-cultural studies could be done to test the adaptability of this correlation.

Last, given that instructor immediacy behaviors are culturally specific, it is necessary to develop instruments measuring instructor behaviors unique in Chinese culture. The expectation of teachers to *jiaoshu yuren* (teach books and educate people) in Chinese culture (Hu & Grove, 1999) required teachers to play both instructional and pastoral roles (Biggs & Watkins, 2001), but the scales used by previous research only examined teachers' instructional role. Zhang and Oetzel (2006) suggested that the Chinese conceptualization of teacher immediacy included instructional, relational, and personal behaviors. Thus, the ideal Chinese immediacy scale should measure the behavior pertaining to the three-dimension roles.

In sum, the findings of this study indicated that American and Chinese students perceived differently in nonverbal immediacy, but not in verbal immediacy. Significant positive correlations were found between teacher immediacy and teacher evaluation in both groups, suggesting that students favorably respond to instructor use of verbal and nonverbal immediacy behaviors. Although some of the teacher immediacy behaviors are more correlated with teacher evaluation, the direction of the relationship is constant.

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Appendix A: Consent Letter to Participants

Dear Students,

Teacher immediacy refers to the verbal and nonverbal communication expressed by teachers that reduces both physical and psychological distance between teachers and students. In this study, you will be asked your perceptions about teacher immediacy. You will also be asked to evaluate the teacher you had in the previous class. This insures that a wide range of teachers will be evaluated and there is no method to identify any individuals connected with this study. It is estimated that it takes less than fifteen minutes to complete the survey.

It is important that your opinions are heard. Your participation is both voluntary and anonymous. You are not required to participate in this research. Your personal information will be kept totally confidential. Your name will never appear on the survey form or in the results.

If you are interested in the result, you will be sent a digest of the findings of the complete study. Please send your request to wxg4278@rit.edu. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at (585) 576-3947 or email me at wxg4278@rit.edu as well.

Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Wenli Gao

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Appendix B: Survey forms

Teacher Immediacy Survey

Directions: Think about the class you had immediately preceding the class you are in right now. How often does that teacher engage in the following types communication? Circle the appropriate response on the “Never” to “Very Often” scale

1. Uses personal examples or talks about experiences she/he has had outside of class.
0. Never 1. Rarely 2. Occasionally 3. Often 4. Very Often
2. Asks questions or encourages students to talk.
0. Never 1. Rarely 2. Occasionally 3. Often 4. Very Often
3. Gets into discussions based on something a student brings up even when this doesn't seem to be part of his/her lecture plan.
0. Never 1. Rarely 2. Occasionally 3. Often 4. Very Often
4. Uses humor in class.
0. Never 1. Rarely 2. Occasionally 3. Often 4. Very Often
5. Addresses students by name.
0. Never 1. Rarely 2. Occasionally 3. Often 4. Very Often
6. Addresses me by name.
0. Never 1. Rarely 2. Occasionally 3. Often 4. Very Often
7. Gets into conversations with individual students before or after classes.
0. Never 1. Rarely 2. Occasionally 3. Often 4. Very Often
8. Has initiated conversations with me before, after or outside of class.
0. Never 1. Rarely 2. Occasionally 3. Often 4. Very Often

9. Refers to class as “our” class or what “we” are doing.
0. Never 1. Rarely 2. Occasionally 3. Often 4. Very Often
10. Provides feedback on my individual work through comments on papers, oral discussions, etc.
0. Never 1. Rarely 2. Occasionally 3. Often 4. Very Often
11. Calls on students to answer questions even if they have not indicated that they want to talk.
0. Never 1. Rarely 2. Occasionally 3. Often 4. Very Often
12. Asks how students feel about an assignment, due date or discussion topic.
0. Never 1. Rarely 2. Occasionally 3. Often 4. Very Often
13. Invites students to telephone or meet with him/her outside of class if they have questions or want to discuss something.
0. Never 1. Rarely 2. Occasionally 3. Often 4. Very Often
14. Asks questions that solicit viewpoints or opinions.
0. Never 1. Rarely 2. Occasionally 3. Often 4. Very Often
15. Praises students’ work, actions or comments.
0. Never 1. Rarely 2. Occasionally 3. Often 4. Very Often
16. Will have discussions about things unrelated to class with individual students or with the class as a whole.
0. Never 1. Rarely 2. Occasionally 3. Often 4. Very Often
17. Is addressed by his/her first name by the students.
0. Never 1. Rarely 2. Occasionally 3. Often 4. Very Often

18. Gestures while talking to the class.

0. Never 1. Rarely 2. Occasionally 3. Often 4. Very Often

19. Uses monotone/dull voice when talking to the class.

0. Never 1. Rarely 2. Occasionally 3. Often 4. Very Often

20. Looks at the class while talking.

0. Never 1. Rarely 2. Occasionally 3. Often 4. Very Often

21. Smiles at the class while talking.

0. Never 1. Rarely 2. Occasionally 3. Often 4. Very Often

22. Has a very tense body position while talking to the class.

0. Never 1. Rarely 2. Occasionally 3. Often 4. Very Often

23. Moves around the classroom while teaching.

0. Never 1. Rarely 2. Occasionally 3. Often 4. Very Often

24. Looks at board or notes while talking to the class.

0. Never 1. Rarely 2. Occasionally 3. Often 4. Very Often

25. Has a very relaxed body position while talking to the class.

0. Never 1. Rarely 2. Occasionally 3. Often 4. Very Often

26. Frowns at individual students in the class.

0. Never 1. Rarely 2. Occasionally 3. Often 4. Very Often

27. Uses a variety of vocal expressions when talking to the class.

0. Never 1. Rarely 2. Occasionally 3. Often 4. Very Often

Teacher Evaluation Survey

Directions: Keep thinking about the class you had immediately preceding the class you are in right now. Circle the appropriate response on the “superior” to “inferior” scale

Superior: exceptionally good course or instructor

Above average: better than the typical course or instructor

Average: typical of courses or instructors

Below average: not as good as the typical course or instructor

Inferior: exceptionally poor course or instructor

1. The instructor’s use of examples or personal experiences to help get points across in class.
1. superior 2. above average 3. average 4. below average 5. inferior
2. The instructor’s concern with whether the students learned the material.
1. superior 2. above average 3. average 4. below average 5. inferior
3. Your interest in learning the course material.
1. superior 2. above average 3. average 4. below average 5. inferior
4. Your general attentiveness in class.
1. superior 2. above average 3. average 4. below average 5. inferior
5. The instructor’s encouragement to students to express opinions.
1. superior 2. above average 3. average 4. below average 5. inferior
6. The instructor’s receptiveness to new ideas and others’ viewpoints.
1. superior 2. above average 3. average 4. below average 5. inferior
7. The appropriateness of the amount of material the instructor attempted to cover.
1. superior 2. above average 3. average 4. below average 5. inferior

8. The appropriateness of the pace at which the instructor attempted to cover the material.

1. superior 2. above average 3. average 4. below average 5. inferior

9. The ease of taking notes on the instructor's presentation.

1. superior 2. above average 3. average 4. below average 5. inferior

10. The adequacy of the outlined direction of the course.

1. superior 2. above average 3. average 4. below average 5. inferior

11. Please rate how effective the instructor was overall.

1. superior 2. above average 3. average 4. below average 5. inferior

Was this course required in your degree program? Yes No

Circle your gender: Male Female

Circle your class level: Freshmen Sophomore Junior
Senior Graduate Other

Appendix C: Tables

Table 1: Standardized Beta weights for VI and NVI scores for American and Chinese Samples

	Verbal Immediacy (VI)	Nonverbal Immediacy (NVI)	Adjusted R ² for Model
American	0.475***	0.364***	0.471***
Chinese	0.352***	0.428***	0.469***

***p<0.0005, Outcome variable: Teacher evaluation scores

Table 2: Correlations between Verbal Immediacy Behaviors and Teacher Evaluation

Behavior	American	Chinese
Summed immediacy score	0.60**	0.60**
1. Uses examples/ experiences	0.37**	0.40**
2. Asks questions/ encourages talk	0.43**	0.34**
3. Gets into discussion	0.40**	0.43**
4. Uses humor in class	0.50**	0.50**
5. Addresses students by name	0.24**	0.35**
6. Addresses me by name	0.25**	0.37**
7. Converses with students	0.47**	0.30**
8. Initiates student conversations	0.32**	0.24**
9. Refers to class as "our" class	0.32**	0.37**
10. Provides feedback on work	0.35**	0.38**
11. Calls on students +	-0.40	-0.23**
12. Asks how students feel	0.33**	0.43**
13. Invites students to meet	0.30**	0.37**
14. Solicits viewpoints or opinions	0.43**	0.52**
15. Praises students' work	0.60**	0.44**
16. Discusses unrelated things	0.47**	0.37**
17. Is addressed by first name	0.19*	0.15

Note: + Item reverse-scored. * p<0.05 **p<0.01

Table 3: Correlations between Nonverbal Immediacy Behaviors and Teacher Evaluation

Behavior	American	Chinese
Summed nonimmediacy score	0.53**	0.63**
1. Gestures	0.24**	0.41**
2. Monotone/ dull voice +	0.46**	0.44**
3. Looks at the class	0.35**	0.35**
4. Smiles at the class	0.37**	0.47**
5. Tense body position +	0.27**	0.24**
6. Moves around the class	0.14	0.34**
7. Looks at the board or notes +	0.15	0.33**
8. Relaxed body position	0.33**	0.32**
9. Frowns at individual students +	0.20*	0.37**
10. Variety of vocal expressions	0.52**	0.35**

Note: + Item reverse-scored. * $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$

Table 4: Means, Standard Deviations of Immediacy for American and Chinese Students

	Group	N	M	SD
Verbal Immediacy (VI)	American	149	2.21	0.65
	Chinese	128	2.16	0.65
Nonverbal Immediacy (NVI)	American	149	2.83	0.48
	Chinese	128	2.52	0.47

Table 5: Correlations among Variables for American Students

Variable	VI	NVI	TE
Verbal Immediacy (VI)	1.00	0.34**	0.60**
Nonverbal Immediacy (NVI)	0.34**	1.00	0.53**
Teacher Evaluation (TE)	0.60**	0.53**	1.00

** $p < 0.01$

Table 6: Correlations among Variables for Chinese Students

Variable	VI	NVI	TE
Verbal Immediacy (VI)	1.00	0.57**	0.60**
Nonverbal Immediacy (NVI)	0.57**	1.00	0.63**
Teacher Evaluation (TE)	0.60**	0.63**	1.00

**p<0.01